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ABSTRACT

This report presents findings of a project that identified and examined three communities where schools have successfully reduced discipline problems and improved learning and behavior of all students, including those with disabilities. Site visits by a research team and expert panels (including both lay community members and professionals) were conducted as were six focus groups comprised of students, family members, general and special educators, administrators, school board members, and community agency representatives. The team visited: (1) Westerly, Rhode Island, where new leadership in the 1990s transformed a district with many civil rights violations into a model program for students who are receiving a continuum of supports and services for behavioral problems; (2) Polk and Hillsborough County school districts in South Florida, where Project ACHIEVE, a schoolwide prevention and early intervention program, targets students who are academically and socially at risk; and (3) Lane County, Oregon, where the school district has successfully implemented a schoolwide violence prevention curriculum. The report's first three sections provide background information. Major cross-site findings are presented in the fourth section and the report concludes with a set of underlying principles reflected in each of the programs and schools. Four appendices list participants, materials, agendas, and the focus group questions. (Contains 78 references.) (DB)

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Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice

Improving Services for Children and Youth with Emotional and Behavioral Problems

ED 430 364

SAFE, DRUG-FREE, AND EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS FOR ALL STUDENTS: *WHAT WORKS!*

Findings from a Collaborative Study Co-Sponsored by:

Safe and Drug-Free Schools,
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
and
Office of Special Education Programs,
Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services
U.S. Department of Education

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Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice

Improving Services for Children and Youth with Emotional and Behavioral Problems

SAFE, DRUG-FREE, AND EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS FOR ALL STUDENTS: *WHAT WORKS!*

Executive Summary

The goal of every parent and educator is to provide each child with an educational experience that will guarantee success in adult life and work. The record shows that most schools are doing a good job, and most students are learning the skills and knowledge they need for the future; however, many teachers and parents are concerned with student behavior, and school safety is a major public concern. While there is a strong research base regarding what can be done to improve student behavior and school safety, this research has not been applied in most schools. Also, there is insufficient documentation of why various programs work, under what conditions they work, and for what students. This report begins to address these issues.

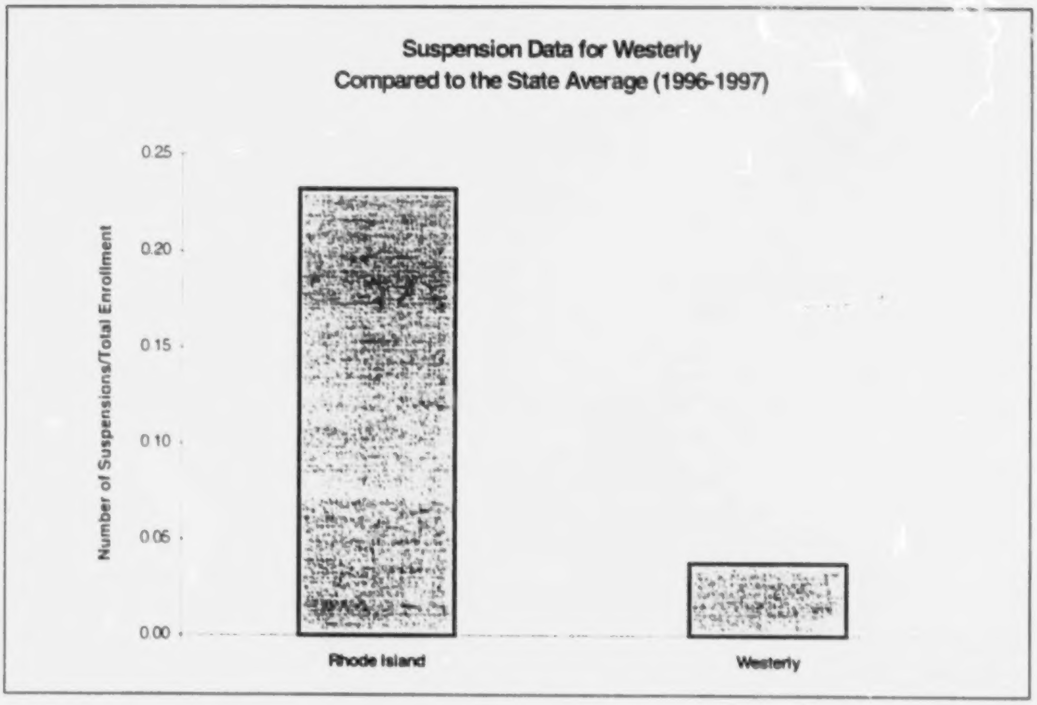
During the winter of 1997/98, two programs in the U.S. Department of Education—Safe and Drug-Free Schools and the Office of Special Education Programs—collaborated on a special project to learn about schools that managed to reduce discipline problems and improve the learning and behavior of all students, including those with disabilities. This report reflects three site visits conducted by a research team accompanied by expert panels. Members of these expert panels included a youth mentor; parents; a school bus driver; a teacher; a teacher union representative; former principals and a former superintendent; a school board member; prominent researchers; State officials from education, mental health, and juvenile justice; and representatives of the U.S. Department of Education. Each site visit also included six focus groups to learn from students, families, general and special educators, administrators and school board members, and community agency representatives over the course of each two-day site visit.

Results, in Brief

The research teams gathered information from schools in three communities where parents, teachers, administrators, and students were working together to make the schools safe and effective learning environments for all their students:

- *Westerly, Rhode Island, where new leadership in the 1990s transformed a district with 100 Office of Civil Rights violations into a model program for students who are receiving a continuum of supports and services for behavioral problems.* A change in philosophy led to a change in practice. School district and building policies were restructured to emphasize both prevention and intervention. Over a 4-year period, behavioral problems were reduced, self-contained classrooms for students with emotional and behavioral problems were reduced from 13 in 1990 to only 2 in 1994 (Keenan, 1997), and the schools became safer and more productive for all students, at all levels: elementary, middle, and high school.

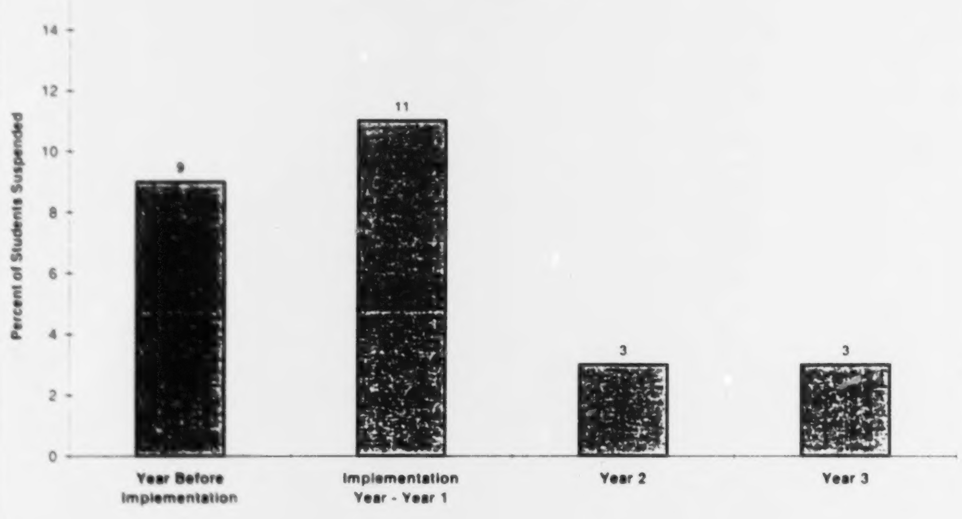
Suspension and discipline statistics suggest the effectiveness of Westerly's policies when compared to other Rhode Island districts. For example, when one divides the total number of suspensions in 1996-1997 by the total student enrollment, Westerly's index is .038, compared to a State index of .232. (See graph: *Suspension Data for Westerly Compared to the State Average (1996-1997).*) Similarly, when one divides the number of reported



disciplinary incidents in 1996-1997 by the school enrollment. Westerly's index is .05 compared to .09 and .31 for two other Rhode Island districts of comparable size and demographics.

- *Polk and Hillsborough County School Districts in South Florida, where Project ACHIEVE, a schoolwide prevention and early intervention program, targets students who are academically and socially at risk.* Students learn social skills, problem-solving methods, and anger-reduction techniques. Since 1990, the program has reduced aggression and violence in Project ACHIEVE schools. For example, during the first three years in one school, disciplinary referrals decreased by 28 percent, and suspensions dropped to one-third of what they had been three years before. (See graph: *Change in Suspension Rates Before and After Implementation of Project ACHIEVE.*) Grade retention, achievement test scores, and academic performance have improved similarly, and, during the past four years, no student has been placed in the county's alternative education program. The project's success has led to the adoption of the Project ACHIEVE model in over 20 additional sites across the United States.

Change in Suspension Rates Before and After Implementation of Project ACHIEVE



- *Effective Behavior Support, Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum, First Step to Success, and Lane School, Lane County, Oregon, where the Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior at the University of Oregon and Lane School of the Lane Education Service District have successfully implemented schoolwide preventive interventions, early intervention programs, and targeted interventions to make schools both safe places for all students and productive learning settings for children who are at risk of severe behavioral problems and school failure.* Results show increased attendance, more days in which behavioral goals are attained, fewer office referrals, and fewer suspensions, among other

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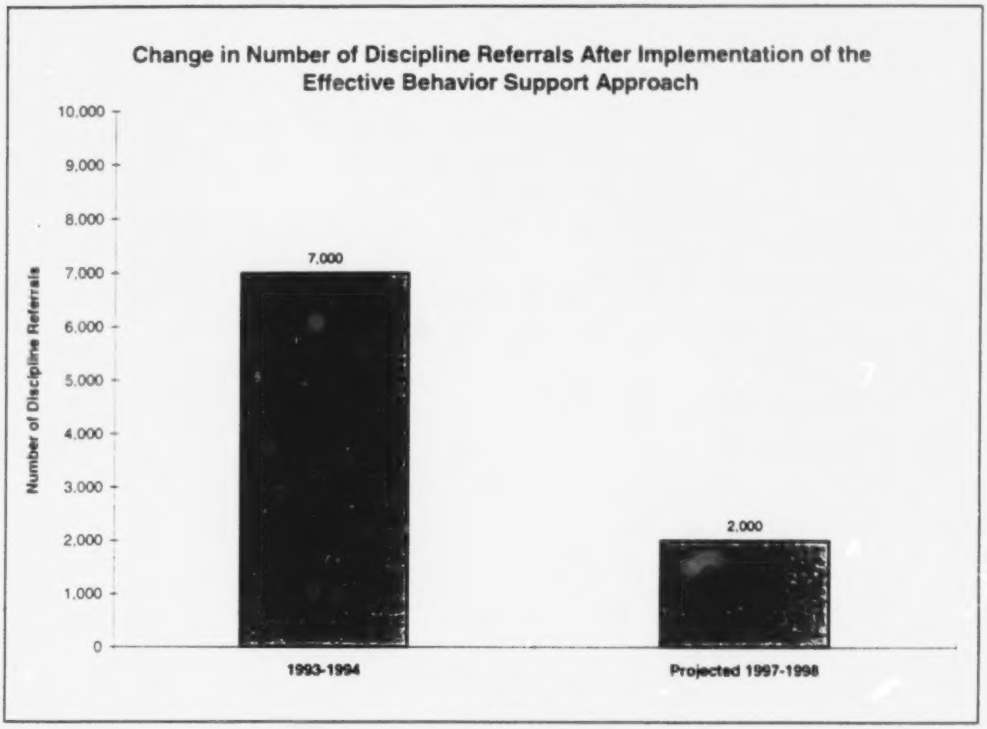
positive changes. In one elementary school that has implemented the Effective Behavior Support program referrals decreased from 7,000 in 1993-1994 to fewer than 2,000 projected for this school year (1997-1998). (See graph: *Change in Number of Discipline Referrals After Implementation of the Effective Behavior Support Approach.*)


Change in Number of Discipline Referrals After Implementation of the Effective Behavior Support Approach

Qualities Shared by Successful Schools

Each of the schools and communities where safe and effective learning environments have been established followed a few, easy-to understand principles and practices that can be replicated and made to work in all schools:

- Safe schools are everybody's business. Administrators, staff, and students must all understand the rules and their consequences. The first step to a safe, drug-free, and effective learning environment is a schoolwide commitment to good behavior.

- Safe schools are one family. Regular and special educators and students are all part of the school family. Discipline and positive behavior supports and activities should involve all staff and students.

- Safe schools are caring schools that value and respect all students. Safe schools build and support staff capacity to be caring and to address the diverse needs of all students.

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- Safe schools have high academic standards and provide students with the support to achieve these standards. Children who learn well, behave well. Many behavior problems are partly the result of academic failures and frustrations.

- Safe schools have high behavioral standards and provide students with positive support to achieve these standards. Well-trained teachers with administrative support can create positive environments that promote appropriate behavior and development.

- Safe schools are strategic schools. They assess needs, develop and implement research-based strategies, and coordinate services to address the needs of all students.

- Safe schools combine three approaches: Schoolwide prevention efforts for all students; early intervention for students who are found to be at risk of behavioral problems; and targeted individualized interventions for students with severe behavior problems.

- Safe schools view the school as part of the larger community. They bring in the parents, mental health and other social service agencies, businesses, youth and juvenile justice workers, and other community services and players to build safe schools and communities.

This report describes these programs and analyzes what they had in common and why they worked. The report draws upon the findings of the site visits, the analyses of the expert panelists who participated in the site visits, published materials on the programs, and a review of the research literature on effective practices. Wherever possible, the report employs the voices of program participants, as well as those of the expert panelists who participated in the site visits.

The first three sections of this report consist of a short background describing the need for safe, drug-free, and effective schools for all students; a description of the study methodology; and summary descriptions of the three programs visited. Major cross-site findings are presented in the fourth section, which describes the common components of the programs studied; summarizes effective practices, approaches, and programs; discusses community-based collaboration; identifies challenges to change; and notes special circumstances. Finally, the report concludes with a set of underlying principles reflected in each of the programs and schools visited.

Background

Two 1996 Gallup polls of the general public and teachers suggest that the perception of a lack of discipline in school—including the perceived increase in drugs, violence, gangs, and weapons—is the number one problem plaguing American public school systems today (Elam, Rose, & Gallup, 1996a; 1996b). Therefore, the most frequent request for technical assistance made by teachers is for help managing problem behaviors (Horner, Diemer, & Brazeau, 1992; Richle, 1990). While there are model programs and practices, it is often difficult to generalize lessons learned from these programs to other settings across America. As Bill Modzeleski, director of the Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program points out, "We haven't done enough to apply the research to a large number of schools. We don't know enough about why various programs work, under what conditions they work, and for whom they work..." (1997, p. 5). This concern was addressed by the crafters of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act—especially in Goal Seven, which states that all schools should be safe, disciplined, and drug-free by the year 2000.

This report comes out of a landmark collaboration between the Office of Special Education Programs and the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Program. Traditionally serving two different populations of children and youth, these two agencies within the U.S. Department of Education have joined to address their mutual goal of promoting safe and drug-free schools that support the learning and development of all students. Both the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1994 address this goal. The purpose of this report is to describe and analyze the findings of three site visits, which were conducted to learn about schools that had managed to reduce discipline problems and improve the learning and behavior of all students, including those with disabilities.

Goals and Purpose of IDEA

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) began in 1975 as the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (P.L. 94-142). It was renamed IDEA with the 1990 amendments (P.L. 101-476) to P.L. 94-142. This law ensured the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to all children with disabilities. Specifically, the purpose of IDEA is to (1) ensure that children with disabilities receive special education and related services to meet their individual needs; (2) ensure that the rights of children with disabilities and their parents or guardians are protected; (3) assist States and localities to provide for the education of all children with disabilities; and (4) assess and ensure the effectiveness of efforts to educate children with disabilities (IDEA, 20 U.S.C. §1400(c)). Provisions are set up by the law to ensure that these goals are met by States, districts, and schools receiving Federal money under IDEA.

In June 1997, amendments to IDEA strengthened it in a number of ways, including the addition of the goal to ensure that schools are safe and conducive to learning. Toward that end, the IDEA amendments of 1997 (P.L. 105-17) delineate procedures for schools to systematically address behavior and discipline problems exhibited by students with disabilities. That includes procedures for changing a student's placement, as well as for proactively addressing the behavior itself by creating a behavior intervention plan. Such a plan should be based on a functional behavioral assessment and should consider positive behavioral interventions, strategies, and supports to address a student's behavior needs. In addition, the behavior intervention plan should clearly state each student's behavioral expectations and consequences for not meeting them.

Goals and Purpose of Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act

Goal Seven of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act calls for safe, disciplined, and drug-free schools. This goal was codified in the 1994 Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act (Title IV of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994, P.L. 103-382) in response to many thefts and violent crimes occurring on or near school campuses each year. The overall purpose of the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act is to help the nation's schools provide a disciplined environment conducive to learning by eliminating violence in and around schools and preventing illegal drug use.

The Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program is administered by the Office for Elementary and Secondary Education in the U.S. Department of Education. To achieve the goals of the Act, this program grants funds to all States each year for developing and implementing effective and research-based programs at the State and local levels that (1) educate communities about violence and drug use, and (2) lead to fewer violent or drug-related incidents in or near schools, objectives for which States are held accountable.

Methodology

The methodology for the research upon which this report is based included a national meeting to define issues; the selection of sites to visit; three site visits by a team that included researchers from the Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice and an expert panel of stakeholders for each site; 18 focus groups; a review of the research literature on effective practice; and an interactive writing process that involved feedback from the members of the three expert panels, as well as from representatives of each of the programs visited.

National Meeting

A national planning meeting was held in Washington, DC, in December 1997 to explore the issues central to understanding how schools, agencies, and communities could collaborate to create safe schools for all students. Participants at the meetings included the U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Mental Health, and the U.S. Department of Justice, along with researchers from three Federally funded school technical assistance projects. (See Appendix A: *National Meeting Participants and Site Visit Expert Panelists.*) Participants examined the common goals of their programs, their roles, and their understanding of critical issues regarding discipline, positive behavior, and safe schools for all students. This included a discussion of how national, State, and local agencies can foster greater collaboration between regular and special educators, and other community-based service providers, to promote safer schools for all students. After discussing issues, the participants suggested a methodology that involved three components:

- Conducting site visits at three research-based programs that (a) are implemented at 10 schools in three parts of the nation; and (b) employ resources from IDEA and the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act;
- Conducting focus groups to gather information during the site visits; and
- Inviting expert panels of stakeholders to participate in each site visit and observe the focus groups.

Selection of Programs and Sites

The programs were chosen according to two criteria. Each program had to have data on the programs' effectiveness, and each had to be collaborating with regular and special education and with its State's Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program. One program selected was nominated by a State Safe and Drug-Free Schools official, another was recommended by a Federal Safe and Drug-Free Schools official, and a third program was selected in consultation with the Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program. In addition, each had been visited by researchers from the American Institutes for Research during 1995-1997 after they had been nominated by (a) prominent researchers, (b) family members, (c) State education department officials, and (d) national experts (Osher & Hanley, forthcoming).

Initially, three programs were selected: Westerly Public School's system-wide efforts in Westerly, Rhode Island; Project ACHIEVE as implemented in Polk and Hillsborough Counties in Florida; and First Step to Success as implemented in Lane County, Oregon. However, because First Step to Success is an early intervention program, the researchers, in consultation with researchers and practitioners from Eugene, Oregon, decided to review three other highly regarded programs during their site visit to Eugene: Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum, Effective Behavior Support (EBS), and Lane School. Hence, the final research included six programs in 10 schools.

Site Visits and Focus Groups

Three site visits were conducted to examine successful efforts that coordinated school and district resources to create safe and productive environments for all students. These local efforts involved collaborations between special education and regular education, and included the involvement of the Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program. The goal was to understand the keys to success at school and district levels and how national, State, and local agencies can foster greater collaboration between regular and special educators and other community-based service providers to promote safer schools for all students. The goal also was to understand what these programs had in common that led to their success in creating safe and drug-free schools that support the learning and development of all students.

The site visits were conduced by three researchers from the Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice and an expert panel of approximately 10 expert panelists who were selected by the researchers in collaboration with project staff to visit each site, representing the following groups of stakeholders:

- Mental health professionals;
- Juvenile justice professionals;
- School psychologists;
- Parents;
- Educators;
- School-related personnel;
- School board members;
- Teachers union representatives;
- Researchers;
- State and local Safe and Drug-Free Schools officials;
- State and local special education officials;
- Collaborative community organization representatives;
- Representatives from the Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education; and
- Representatives from the Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program, U.S. Department of Education.

Not all groups were represented at every site. These expert panelists attended both days of the site visit, observing and synthesizing the information gathered in focus groups, which are described in more detail below.

The protocol for each site visit was as consistent as possible. Each began with a visit to school buildings using the program and a presentation by the program directors, describing its design and implementation at the school level. During the afternoon of the first day and the morning of the second day, focus groups were conducted with six to twelve representatives of the following groups: students, family members, special educators and support personnel, regular educators, administrators and school board members, and community agency representatives. Each focus group met for one hour and was asked a common set of questions, which were used at all three sites. Spare time allowed expert panelists to ask focus group members follow-up questions. During the afternoon of the second day, expert panelists synthesized what they had learned from the site visits and focus groups, using the tentative outline of this report to organize the discussion.

In order to increase the integrity of the focus group data, the focus groups were taped. In addition, the two senior authors alternated in conducting the focus groups; the one not conducting the focus group took extensive notes. In addition, the third researcher used a laptop computer to record all focus group and expert panel discussions.

Data Analysis

After the site visits were completed and the notes from the site visits analyzed, the data were sorted both by site and by focus group in order to identify factors that were common to each site as well as to all of the sites. A literature review was then conducted to ascertain if there was research support for the preliminary findings. The analysis and literature review were incorporated into a draft report that was sent out for validation and elaboration by expert panelists who had participated in the site visits as well as by representatives from each of the programs visited. The results of their feedback was incorporated into the report, which is presented herein.

Program Descriptions

The communities visited were quite varied; however, each faced the problems that concern students, families, educators, and policy makers – increased poverty, child abuse, substance abuse, gang involvement, community violence, and limited school and community resources.

Westerly, Rhode Island, is a small seacoast city with a population of 21,605 in 1990. Westerly made up one school district, which was involved in a district-wide effort that involved all of its schools. Westerly had an economically diverse population that ranged from affluent retirees to skilled workers struggling with the downsizing of the maritime industry, seasonal service personnel who worked in the tourist industry, and a new influx of residents who came to work in nearby casinos. The number of Westerly students who were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch programs was increasing, and ranged from 11 percent to 40 percent at different schools within the district.

Polk and Hillsborough Counties in Florida had 1990 populations of 405,382 and 834,054, respectively. Polk County, which is just east of Tampa, has approximately 80,000 students of whom approximately 48,000 were elementary students. Of these students, 28 percent where students of color, and 48 percent were eligible to receive a free or reduced-price lunch. Hillsborough County, which is on the Gulf of Mexico and includes the city of Tampa, had 131,000 students in public schools, of whom 40 percent were students of color. Project ACHIEVE is implemented in a number of Polk County Schools, one of which was visited. This school, Jesse Keen Elementary School, is a Chapter 1 and Full Service school, with 647 students, 73 percent of whom receive a free or partial breakfast or lunch, and 41 percent of whom are students of color. Project ACHIEVE is implemented in five Hillsborough County Schools, which collectively have 75 percent of their students on free or reduced-price lunches. The Hillsborough County school which provided significant data was the Foster Elementary School, an inner-city school, in which 86 percent of the students were on free or reduced-price meals, and most of the students came from single-parent homes.

Lane County, Oregon, stretches from the Cascade Mountains in the east to the Pacific Ocean in the West. It has a population of 301,900 (1990 figures). Lane is an economically diverse county whose schools frequently benefit from their proximity to the University of Oregon in the town of Eugene. Lane's economy has been confronted by the downsizing of the lumber industry and by changes in its agricultural economy. Its schools and social services have faced significant cuts in State (as well as Federal) funding. In 1990, there were 16 school districts in Lane County. The two neighborhood schools which provided data cited in this study were located in and around Eugene. Kennedy Middle School has 580 students, 134 of whom are eligible to receive a free or reduced-priced lunch. Fern Ridge Middle School is located in a more rural area of Lane County and has 547 students, 197 of whom are eligible for the free and reduced-priced lunch program.

A common characteristic at each school was the emphasis on a three-tiered system of addressing student behavior: schoolwide prevention efforts that address all students; early intervention programs that address the needs of students at risk for developing serious behavior problems; and targeted interventions for students who display chronic behavior problems that require more intensive treatments. This three-tiered model is described in greater detail in the section on Effective Approaches, Practices, and Programs, and examples of each are provided..

Westerly Public Schools, Westerly, Rhode Island

Westerly, Rhode Island, is a district of about 3,600 students located on the State's Southern coast. In the late 1980s, the district was cited with over 100 Office of Civil Rights violations concerning its education of students with disabilities. Under new leadership, the district decided it needed to address these problems through changes not only in practice, but also in philosophy. Embracing the value of including all students, Westerly evaluated what its needs were, district-wide, and then implemented intensive staff development and team teaching to provide educators with the skills needed to meet the goal of educating as many students as possible within their neighborhood schools. They restructured the schools, as well as the district and building policies and programs to reflect their clear expectations and commitment to the needs of each individual student, incorporating preventive district-wide programs; provided intervention when needed; and offered targeted interventions for students with more serious needs. The effect this process had on one Westerly teacher is described in the sidebar *A Westerly Teacher Writes About the Change Process and Its Impact*. As the President of the School Committee said in one focus group, "What is the alternative? This is our community! These are our kids!" Her comment reflected the philosophical shift that occurred in the last eight years, not only in the schools, but throughout the entire community.

A Westerly Teacher Writes About the Change Process and Its Impact

When I came to Westerly in 1987 we had a typical educational system. Special education students were in self-contained classrooms or in facilities throughout the State. Staff development was minimal. Children who misbehaved were sent to the principal to be dealt with. We had excellent teachers who knew the material to be taught and how to present it but who usually worked behind closed doors. All of this had seemed to work fine for years. What we didn't realize was that we were not meeting the most basic needs of some of our students, our special needs population. Supporting this is the fact that we had over one hundred special education violations against us.

When Mark Hawk became the new Special Education Director things began to change. Many of us were faced with the fact that some of these children were going to be mainstreamed into our regular education rooms. At the time, I was *more than* not pleased with this decision and many others shared my concerns. It was fine for the children to go to gym, art, and music with our children. But in a very short time we were being asked to let them join other activities in our rooms, even academics. I had a fear which many others shared. I had no special education training. Did I even know how to teach these children? Without aides this could be a heavy load.

Many of our concerns centered on the behavior needs of the students. As I look back I am not sure why I objected to these students joining our room. I think I felt that I would now be responsible for someone else's students. Why would I want to lighten their load when my hands were already full? I saw this as a battle between special education and regular education. I really wasn't thinking about the students. I think that was my biggest mistake—that I didn't see that these children *needed* to become *my* students.

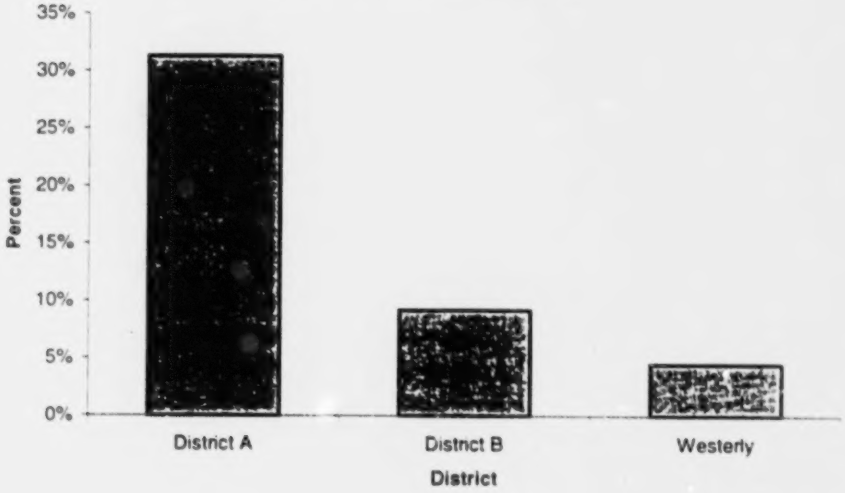
In 1995…I received two students in my room along with the promise of an all-day aide. These students opened my eyes! I had been unaware that inclusion would be so positive for the children joining us and even more startling to me was the fact that it also benefited *every other student* in my room. I learned from all of the students that year. Together, we became a family-like unit. We had differences and celebrated these differences. The children learned from each other and more importantly cared for one another. Teaching with the aide's assistance was fun, and I no longer worried about who would teach the children—we just taught them all. Personally and professionally, I took a giant step forward that year and would never want to return to self-contained classrooms.

Of course, our job is never done and we must continue to seek ways to improve our practices. What we all realize is that as families change we must change to meet their needs. We must never change our view that children are precious and deserve our respect and guidance. We can never let what we teach be more important than who we teach. In Westerly, children really do come first! (E. D. Wright, personal communication, January 27, 1998)

Westerly created a continual system of care for its students from early elementary school through high school in which (in the words of Paula, an assistant principal at Westerly High School), "Schools are consistent. Students know the rules, know the consequences, and get support to know what was wrong and how to fix it." The school system developed a coordinated program of service delivery, incorporating many components. To serve their students with behavioral needs, the elementary and middle schools established planning centers staffed by a counselor or teacher. Any student may select to go to a planning center for a period of the day to work on academic work in its structured setting or to "cool off" and work through a problem if he or she is angry. In addition, the planning centers may help students and their families access community services they might need. Students receiving special education may have time spent in the planning center written into their Individualized Education Plans (IEP). And it is there that students might work on skills that appear in their behavior intervention plans. (For more information on the planning centers, see *Addressing the Needs of Students at Risk: Planning Centers for All Students in Westerly, Rhode Island,* in the section describing Early Intervention.)

Westerly administrators speak of a "zero failure policy," of refusing to "give up on any student," and of providing students with "meaningful supports" that are "child-focused." For example, recognizing the need for integrating services within the school setting for students with a variety of needs, Westerly High School developed the Westerly Integrated Social Services Program (WISSP). Located in the school building and directed by a school psychologist, WISSP coordinates school services and community resources in a place accessible to students and their families to meet any social or emotional needs they might have. Its vision is "to promote all students' success in school and enhance the quality of life for all families in the community" (WISSP Pamphlet, 1997). For students at risk of school failure or of dropping out of school, taking advantage of WISSP services keeps them in the school building. As families come to the WISSP Center for counseling or other assistance, they get a positive experience within the school that helps to build trusting, respectful, and cooperative relationships between school and home. (For more information about WISSP, see *Involving the Community to Improve Services for Children's' Special Needs* in the section describing Targeted Intervention.)

Discipline Incidents in Districts Comparable in Size and Demographics to Westerly



The hallmark of all of Westerly's programs is that they seek to build positive relationships between and among students, teachers, administrators, families, and community members. Westerly teachers feel they can ask for guidance in their classrooms. "Positive student achievement," observed Jim, an assistant principal at Westerly High School, "is everyone's goal. Egos don't get in the way, throughout the system. All are comfortable asking others for assistance in meeting common goals." Discipline in Westerly is proactive and corrective rather than punitive. Students understand the school rules because they are clear, consistent, and common sense. One student summarized it, "Don't do anything you wouldn't do in front of your mother." Providing a student or family with the support each needs to be successful and stay strong is done in a non-judgmental manner that addresses underlying needs. Westerly's efforts have paid off in a suspension rate nearly six times smaller than the State figure (.038 compared to .232). (See *Suspension Data for Westerly Compared to the State Average (1996-1997)* in the Executive Summary.) Similarly, Westerly's figures are also lower in comparison to two demographically similar towns in Rhode Island. The graph *Number of Discipline Incidents in Districts Comparable in Size and Demographics to Westerly*, illustrates this difference for the 1996-1997 school year. The result of Westerly's school and district-wide efforts is a culture of safety and respect for all students that is discernible in the youngest student up through the district superintendent.

Project ACHIEVE, Polk and Hillsborough Counties, Florida

Project ACHIEVE is a schoolwide prevention and early intervention program that targets elementary-aged students who are academically and socially at risk. Project ACHIEVE involves comprehensive schoolwide planning efforts to address academic and behavioral problems. The design of Project ACHIEVE includes teaching students social skills, problem-solving methods, and anger-management techniques, as well as reducing acts of aggression and violence by elementary school students. Developed by Howie Knoff and George Batsche in the School Psychology Program at the University of South Florida, Project ACHIEVE was originally implemented in schools in the Polk and Hillsborough County School Districts; there are now over 20 Project ACHIEVE sites across the country. Project ACHIEVE provides schoolwide prevention services in every classroom with the aim of reducing disciplinary referrals.

Project ACHIEVE involves a number of components, which work in concert to create a comprehensive schoolwide prevention program that involves school teachers and staff, parents, students, and the community. These components include:

- Strategic planning;
- Intensive staff development and training in social skills, leading to a building-wide school discipline and behavior-management system;
- Referral Question Consultation problem-solving training;
- Classroom Observation/Cumulative Folder Analysis/Effective Instruction training;
- Behavioral Intervention training;
- Curriculum-Based Assessment and Curriculum-Based Measurement training;
- Instructional/Curricular Intervention training; and

- A commitment to serve all students and provide them with the academic and behavioral support to reach high, yet reasonable, academic and behavioral expectations.

To become a Project ACHIEVE school requires an 80 percent acceptance of the program by school staff. Once the program is accepted, an organizational analysis and needs assessment of the school and surrounding community is completed. A School Climate Team is formed, and grade-level leaders and a pupil personnel support team are identified. In addition, pre-project baseline data are collected. All faculty and staff at the school undergo comprehensive in-service and follow-up training in the Project ACHIEVE components. The training always builds upon the existing strengths, resources, and successes of each building. This builds a team approach to problem solving, which Stephanie, a fourth-grade regular education teacher, contrasted to how Jesse Keen Elementary School functioned before the introduction of Project ACHIEVE: "We would have our staff at each other's throats all the time. Now we don't; we work together. Before, teachers [were] territorial. And now, we really have a camaraderie. Our levels work together really well, we share, we're responsible for all the kids, not just our own classroom. It's the whole school. We're responsible for the little ones, the big ones, all of them." Several teachers from Jesse Keen share their perceptions of how Project ACHIEVE has changed their school in the sidebar *Jesse Keen Elementary School Teachers Describe the Impact of Project ACHIEVE.*

Parent involvement is an important component of the program. Project ACHIEVE schools reach out to parents and attempt to provide them with training and support. Parents feel welcome at the school, are provided with support to get to school, when necessary (e.g., transportation and scheduling accommodations), and receive regular information from the school on its activities and feedback regarding their children. For example, parents at Jesse Keen

Jesse Keen Elementary School Teachers Describe the Impact of Project ACHIEVE

- As a beginning teacher when this first started, not only with the children, but as teachers and as people we have a tendency…to be negative…. When you're negative, your students have a tendency to be negative and off task, and you have all the behavior problems; whereas with all the training we have, we're positive first and our students are much more positive because of that, also. (Denise, 2nd-grade teacher)
- This program has impacted our entire lives. I don't think we can emphasize enough professionally, because it has changed us all as professionals. It certainly has impacted all of us throughout our lives and in all of our daily situations that don't even have to do with school. I wouldn't want to find out what this school was like without it, because I remember what it was like before we had Project ACHIEVE. I used to be the substance abuse coordinator and felt extremely needed. I don't feel nearly as needed now as I was prior to Project ACHIEVE. We've lived it, and we really believe it. (Sandi, resource teacher)
- The kids treat each other in a kinder manner. For example, walking in line, if someone steps on the back of their shoe, before, they'd blow up, "Get off my shoe!" The kids love to talk about it, too. After lunch, we have a social skills chart time when they think of somebody they've seen applying the social skill during the day. They're kinder, with more "thank yous" and more "that's okay." (Jan, 5th-grade teacher)
- The training that we've received though the years of association with Project ACHIEVE has raised the ability level of everybody in the school, so that most everyone is very comfortable dealing with special education kids at all levels. It makes including kids a lot easier, when [teachers'] levels of expertise is such that they don't hesitate. I'll have teachers actually come to me and [ask to have kids mainstreamed into their classes]. The more training you have, your level of confidence goes up, and then that snowballs in a very positive way. (Barbara, Early Childhood Special Education coordinator)
- I would have burst out long before now. This program is a life saver, and my heart goes out to teachers [in other schools], and I know what they're saying when they say they can't teach because of the discipline. This is what saved us…from that frustration [of not being able to teach.] The kids are academically higher than they used to be. I'm noticing that more and more every year; they're listening better, you can teach them more, it's just fantastic. If we didn't have this program, we'd be on the nightly news about every other day. (Peggy, 3rd-grade teacher)

Elementary School receive weekly newsletters on what is learned in their child's class – including social skills. Staff are provided with tools to reach out to parents in a positive manner. Lorrie, a parent of three children and PTA President, observed that she had never heard a teacher say to a parent, "I have a problem," rather, it was, "We need to work on this..." or "I have an idea for you."

A key component of Project ACHIEVE is the Stop & Think Social Skills process, which is fully integrated into the school curriculum. Students are taught easy-to-remember steps to making good choices from the time they enter their school's pre-kindergarten program through the time they go to middle school. Visual reminders (i.e., Stop & Think stop signs) can be found all over the school, including painted on the playground and on T-shirts worn by staff, thereby enhancing an environment that reinforces the skills students are taught. (For more information about Stop and Think, see *Starting Early: Clear, Consistent, and Simple Schoolwide Steps to Preventing Behavior Problems* in the section describing Prevention.)

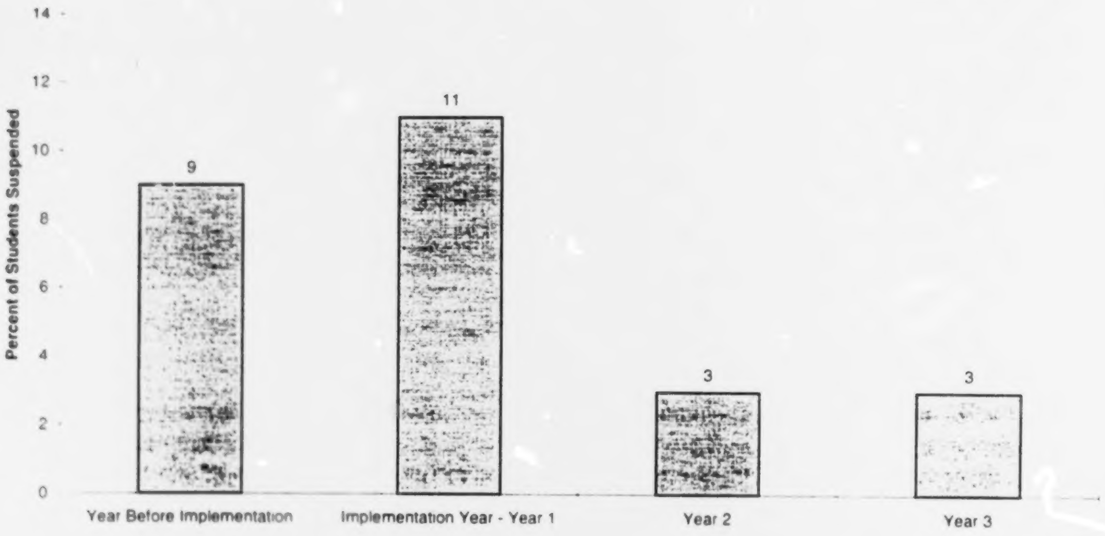
Project ACHIEVE has a strong evaluation component that considers student outcomes, teacher outcomes, school outcomes, and direct and indirect outcomes (e.g., frequency of use by non-instructional personnel or the extent to which the curriculum is incorporated into parent education and training programs). Project ACHIEVE (Knoff & Batsche, 1995) cites the following as its major accomplishments:

- Decrease by 23 percent in total disciplinary referrals to the principal's office;
- Decrease in out-of-school suspensions from 65 (9 percent of students) to 19 (3 percent of the student population);
- Improvement in teachers' perceptions of school climate;
- Decrease in student grade retention from 61 (6 percent of students) to 1 (0.006 percent of the student population);
- Increase in the number of students scoring above the 50th percentile on end-of-year achievement tests, especially for those involved at the youngest ages; and
- Academic improvements for those students whose parents were trained in the Parent Drop-in Center at Jesse Keen Elementary School.

The change in suspension rates in the first three years of implementing Project ACHIEVE, from 11 percent in year one to only 3 percent in year three are illustrated in the graph, *Change in Suspension Rates Before and After Implementation of Project ACHIEVE.*

Polk and Hillsborough County Administrators and School Psychologists who had worked with schools with and without Project ACHIEVE have seen the impact of the intervention. Danielle, the school psychologist, said that, "[Jesse Keen] was [known as] the school from hell. No psychologist wanted it; they used to make a psychologist take it for a year at a time – a tour of duty, they called it." Now, she says, "this is the best school that I have. I love this school." Joyce, principal of Jesse Keen Elementary School, described the change in the "whole culture and atmosphere" of the school, which "used to have children lined up all day long for discipline." "Without it," the past-chair of the Polk County School Board remarked, "you wouldn't have the statistics on the drop in bus discipline, visits to the office, and all those related areas. You would probably have the disruptive kid that the teachers can't handle, more disruption on the bus, just as it was before. Primarily, teachers would still not know what to do about the problems. You wouldn't have the community involved. We'd probably use the paddle a lot more [referring to a 1980's policy of corporal punishment]. It would be unthinkable. I would not want to be in school without Project ACHIEVE." Linda, director of the Polk County Community and Drug Education Program, shared her perspective: "If you didn't have Project ACHIEVE at Jesse Keen Elementary School, there would definitely be more referrals for special education, more discipline referrals to the office, more child abuse in the community. They're doing a terrific job here. Without all of the support systems that are in place here, you wouldn't see a lot in the course of a year, but the dropout rate would be higher, substance abuse levels would be higher, and other things we know that down the road would happen."

Change in Suspension Rates
Before and After
Implementation of Project ACHIEVE



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Effective Behavior Support, Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum, First Step to Success, and Lane School, Lane County, Oregon

Within six Lane County schools, the study examined four interventions, three of which were developed by the Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior at the University of Oregon. The university has an ongoing relationship with the schools of Eugene, Oregon, that spans several decades. In addition, the Lane Education Service District (an intermediate education unit) operates Lane School, an alternative program for students who require a more intensive, targeted intervention program and a consulting service to the county's schools.

The Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior has supported the implementation of two schoolwide prevention programs: Effective Behavior Support (EBS) and Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum; and it has supported one early intervention program: First Step to Success. Each schoolwide intervention or approach addresses the behavior of all students of all ages, while First Step to Success facilitates the early identification of behavior problems in kindergarten students and targets interventions for students with severe emotional and behavioral problems.

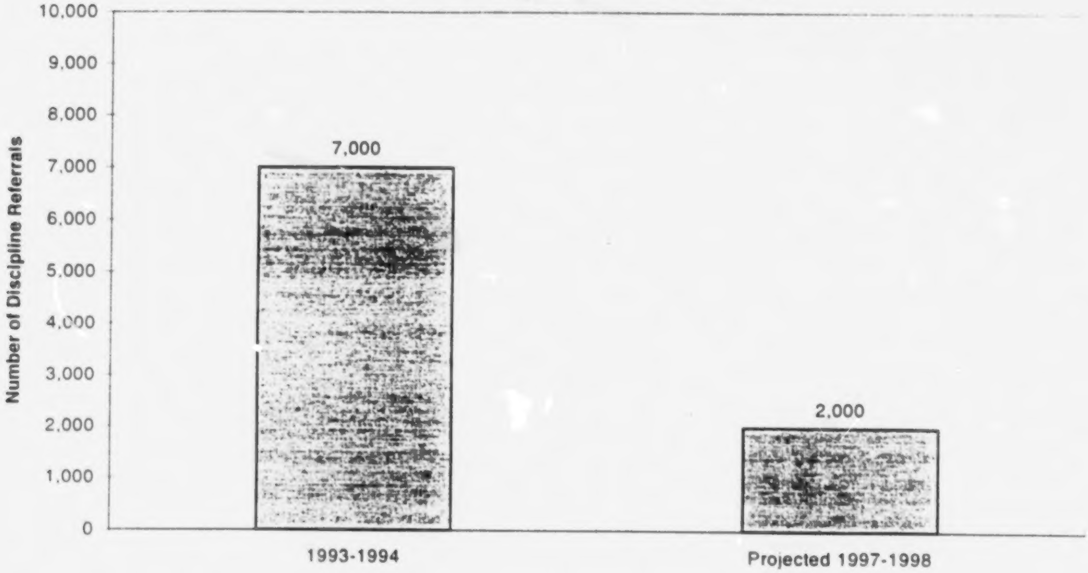
Effective Behavior Support

Effective Behavior Support (EBS) is a schoolwide approach, which schools adopt as a preventive intervention, that provides behavioral support for their students, including students who exhibit chronic behavior problems (Colvin, Kameenui, & Sugai, 1993; Sugai, 1996; Sugai & Horner, 1994). Each EBS school has an EBS Team that takes responsibility for improving behavioral support for their students throughout the system. The key elements of EBS (Colvin, Kameenui, & Sugai, 1993; Colvin, Sugai, & Kameenui, 1993; Gresham, Sugai, Horner, Quinn, & McInerney, 1998) are:

- Statement of purpose (or mission);
- List of positively stated behavioral expectations or rules;
- Procedures for directly teaching these expectations to students;
- Continuum of strategies for encouraging these expectations;
- Continuum of strategies for discouraging rule violations; and
- Procedures for monitoring and record-keeping.

EBS Schools clarify expectations for student behavior and give students reminders when needed; simplify the rules students are expected to follow; teach children appropriate, prosocial behaviors; and reward students when they have been "caught doing something good." Consequences for inappropriate behaviors are understood and are quickly acted upon when warranted. In EBS schools, classrooms and special settings within the school (e.g., the cafeteria or playground) have procedures that are consistent with the schoolwide expectations for students and staff. For students whose behavior needs are beyond the reach of the EBS features, a behavior support team addresses their special needs by establishing individual action teams and plans for each student.

Change in Number of Discipline Referrals After Implementation of the Effective Behavior Support Approach



The data on EBS show it was effective in reducing office referrals by an average of 42 percent in the first year of implementing the program, especially in the time before school vacations when referrals had been at their highest the previous year (Taylor-Greene et al., 1997). At one elementary school, the implementation of EBS has meant a decrease in the number of discipline referrals from 7,000 in 1993-1994 to fewer than 2,000 projected for this year (1997-1998). The preceding graph, *Change in Number of Discipline Referrals After Implementation of the Effective Behavior Support Approach*, illustrates this effect.

Before Teacher Assistance Teams were put in place by the EBS Team to address the needs of children with the most problematic behaviors, most teachers referred these students for alternative placements. Under the new EBS system, teachers requesting help receive a set of functional suggestions, or get additional resources from an Action Team (a prereferral team responsible for reviewing case studies of students recommended for special education), to help them manage the student's behavior, both of which succeed in keeping the student in class. Faculty favor the program because they feel they can be successful as teachers, and, in fact, the number of teacher requests resulting in a response from the Action Team dropped by 75 percent in the first year of implementation (Todd, Horner,

What Lane County Administrators Think About the Impact of Effective Behavior Support (EBS)

When asked what their school would be like without EBS, school administrators responded in the following manner:

- There is nothing left of the school that's the same but the walls. (Susan, middle school principal)
- Argh! I cannot imagine going back. The teachers would feel overwhelmed and not have the tools they need; they'd feel discouraged and less empowered. (Ginger, elementary school principal)
- It would be like Sisyphus on one leg. There would be more focus on the negative and not on the positive. There would be lots of bickering, and a climate of a revolving door. (Randy, middle school principal)
- I can remember when I'd go to meetings and student behavior was a topic of conversation. Now, people feel better about it and feel that they can address it. (Cindy, director of district educational support services)

Sugai, & Sprague, in press). See sidebar *What Lane County Administrators Think About the Impact of Effective Behavior Support (EBS)* for administrators' accounts of the effect of these programs on Lane County schools.

Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum

As students get older, their abilities to solve their own problems improve. Second Step is a universal intervention that addresses violence prevention through the development of empathy, problem-solving skills, and anger-management techniques. Improving these skills can help all children strengthen their coping skills, thereby increasing their self-esteem and their ability to get along with others, including teachers, peers, and family members (Mehas et al., 1998). Like Project ACHIEVE in Florida, the Second Step curriculum can be integrated into teachers' academic instruction, as well as be employed on the playground and in other situations throughout the school day with all students. Both programs aim to teach students the skills they need, provide opportunities to role-play and practice them in real situations, and create environments that reinforce the use of these skills.

In a randomized control study of the effects of the Second Step program, researchers found that it produced positive changes in student behavior after only 17 hours of classroom exposure to the curriculum (Grossman et al., 1997). Direct observation was made of student behavior in various settings (i.e., classroom, cafeteria, and playground) and at various stages of intervention (i.e., baseline compared to observations at two weeks and six months following completion of the curriculum). This observation revealed significant decreases ($p=<.05$) in physical aggression and significant increases ($p=<.05$) in neutral and prosocial behavior in these school settings. While these changes were reported as only moderately statistically significant, it was pointed out by reviewers (Rosenberg, Powell, & Hammond, 1997) that the intervention had a strong practical significance — the behavioral changes observed equated to approximately "30 fewer acts of 'negative physical behavior' and more than 800 more acts of 'neutral/prosocial behavior' per class per every day" (p. 1641).

First Step to Success

First Step to Success is an early intervention designed to address the needs of kindergartners identified as having antisocial or aggressive behaviors. First Step to Success includes three components: a kindergarten-wide screening process, the classroom-based CLASS curriculum, and HomeBase, which involves families in the intervention process. First Step to Success incorporates the use of a trained consultant to work with teachers and parents to give them the skills to teach students replacement behaviors and reward students when those behaviors are used appropriately and consistently. To this end, students are taught specific skills and behaviors to use in place of inappropriate behaviors they have used in the past. During the school day, the consultant, teacher, or aide gives the First Step to Success student visual cues (i.e., a green or red card) to indicate whether or not he or she is on task and using appropriate behaviors. Throughout the day, the student accrues points toward his or her behavioral goal. If the student makes the daily goals, he or she gets to choose a fun activity the whole class can do and appreciate. Each evening, parents receive feedback about how their child's day went. Parents are trained and encouraged to reward the student's positive behavior by spending some extra time with their child at a fun activity, such as playing a game or taking a walk together. Once the classroom teacher feels comfortable (around day 6) taking full responsibility for implementing the classroom-based CLASS module, the consultant begins working with the student's parents to help them to implement the HomeBase component of the program. (See *Including Parents in the Equation: First Step to Success Empowers Parents, Teachers, and Students,* for a more detailed description of this process.)

Program data document that First Step to Success is effective and has lasting effects of at least three years beyond the end of the intervention, even without follow-up intervention (ongoing longitudinal research will assess the effects over a longer period of time). These effects are visible across years in school, classroom settings, teachers, and peer groups. Large, statistically significant effect sizes (ES) were reported on teacher rating scales for adaptive (ES = 1.17) and maladaptive (ES = 0.93) behavior, aggressive behavior (ES = 0.99) from the Achenbach Behavior Checklist, and in-classroom observations of academic engaged time (ES = 0.97) (Walker, Kavanaugh, Stiller, Golly, Severson, & Feil, in press). In addition, teachers using First Step to Success in their classrooms express a high degree of satisfaction with the program, remarking that it is easy to learn and implement and has favorable results with their students (Golly, Stiller, & Walker, under review; Walker, 1998).

Lane School, Lane Education Service District

Lane School, an alternative setting for students with the most serious behavioral problems, is supported by the Lane Education Service District. With just four classrooms, Lane School had only 26 students in its program at the time of the site visit. The program is small so that students can receive the structure, attention, and skills they need to improve their behavior and their academic performance, and prepare to go back to their neighborhood schools. Interventions are highly individualized, and the emphasis is on effective problem solving through communication with others and on improving each student's academic performance. The supervisor of Lane School emphasizes the need for efficient and effective structures in place that lead to the creation of "civil classroom and school climates." This includes having a system of clear rules, teaching students alternative responses to anger and then reinforcing those skills, intervening in aggression early, deterring violent behaviors with clear consequences, and emphasizing academics consistently.

The school is organized in a level system through which students advance as they meet their individualized behavioral and academic goals, which they help set for themselves. In addition, Lane School uses a system of rewards for positive behavior, and involves parents and community agencies to a high degree to help ensure that the needs of each student have been met. Lane School teachers speak of holding high expectations, treating students with respect, "work[ing] hard to create a positive, enthusiastic learning environment," "smother[ing] students with positives," and assessing student academic needs and "teach[ing] to their strengths while remediating weaknesses." Lane School fosters students' academic and social success by creating a caring, respectful environment that provides them with positive feedback and experiences. As students are prepared to return to their home schools, a Lane School consultant visits the home school to prepare it for the return of the student. The consultant works with student advocates or other school personnel to discuss positive behavioral support methods and other interventions schools can use with their students who exhibit behavioral problems. During these visits, consultants also work with students at those schools who have been referred for chronic behavioral problems.

Data on Lane School students show positive changes, the size of which correlate with the level the students are on in the program:

- Increased student attendance over the course of one school year;
- More days in which behavioral goals are attained;
- Fewer office referrals and in-school suspensions;
- More rewards earned for appropriate behavior on the school bus;
- Fewer suspensions (both the number of students and the number of days); and
- Increased average number of goals students achieve daily.

Lane School emphasizes a strong commitment to successfully transitioning students back into their home schools, a process that begins the day students enroll in Lane School. These transitions work best when Lane School staff (in the words of Robin, a Lane School teacher and transition specialist) succeed in "export[ing] the program and ... its strategies into the county's schools." These schools (only some of those to which students return) are (in Robin's words) "truly committed to advocating for each child" and (in the words of Dorothy, a Lane School consultant who spends half of her time in local schools) "support each child and see him as a child with a legitimate disability."

Once the students are ready to begin their return to their home schools, there is an extensive transition process to not only prepare the students, but the receiving schools, as well. This process usually lasts about one year, with the students beginning by taking only one or two classes in their neighborhood schools while continuing classes at Lane School. Over 90 percent of the students who begin the transition process successfully complete it and officially "exit" the Lane School program. Of those 90 percent, 74 percent successfully remain in their transition settings one calendar year later, without having received any follow-up support from the Lane School staff.

Aggregate data collected over the last five years reflect the success of Lane School students. Of all the students who entered Lane School:

- 58% transitioned back into their neighborhood schools,
- 11% "IEPed" out (e.g., the IEP recommended placement in other settings such as vocational education programs), and
- 11% moved out of the district.

Of the other 20%, half of the students dropped out of the program and half were incarcerated for out-of-school activities. It is important to note, however, that starting in year two of this five year period, substantial changes were made in the Lane School program. Although disaggregated quantitative data is not available for the period after the substantial changes were made, qualitative data suggest that the outcomes for this three year period would be even better than the five year data suggest. (George, Valore, Quinn, & Varisco, 1997).

Cross-Site Findings

The site visits, including the focus group sessions and expert panel discussions, revealed many commonalties among the projects and programs. These are summarized around five major topics: creating safe schools and effective environments for all students; effective approaches and practices; suggestions for how national, State, and local agencies can foster greater collaboration between regular and special educators, as well as other community-based service providers, to promote safer schools for all students; challenges to change; and special circumstances that should be addressed. Each of these topics is discussed below, with examples drawn from the site visits.

Creating Safe Schools and Effective Environments

Analysis of data gathered during the site visits revealed that the key factors related to creating safe and socially supportive environments (where positive prosocial behavior is supported and encouraged and all children learn) could best be grouped into two broad categories: elements needed to create and sustain effective environments, and components of effective programs. A discussion of these two broad categories follows.

Creating and Sustaining Effective Environments

In all of the sites, specific elements were in place during creation of these safe, drug-free, and effective schools that work for all students. Each school was characterized by: strong and effective leadership and support, an assessment of specific needs, ongoing data collection, and active coordinated collaboration of stakeholders.

Providing Leadership and Support

Effective leadership was necessary to "reculture" schools. A competent leader was described as a person or group that embodied the value of problem solving and serving all students, shared information, and helped develop and sustain a sense of ownership and pride among staff, students, and parents. Effective leadership guided the change process while ensuring that the support to create these environments was provided to the extent needed and on time. Effective leadership, a Westerly school psychologist stated, was necessary to enable staff to "stay focused, take chances, and stay extremely determined to work toward that end." Similarly, a teacher in a Project ACHIEVE school highlighted the importance of the administration in setting a tone that, "We're all in this together. They're all our kids. It doesn't matter what that child's placement is. There will always be support." As the physical education instructor at a Project ACHIEVE school observed, "the principal makes it a family and a team – right down through the students."

While the intensity of the resources may have changed after each program was implemented, the need for leadership and support remained. In every site, people commented that leaders had to be committed to providing sufficient financial resources to the process to ensure its effective implementation and continuation. In addition to financial support, leaders provided other resources, such as training for everyone involved in the change process,[1] including parents. For example, because of the importance of support, it was addressed at union contract negotiations and written into the teachers' contract. Project ACHIEVE provides annual training for review purposes, as well as to train new staff. The Eugene school districts (in the words of Jeff Sprague, the co-director of the Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior) built the schools' "compassion" by supporting release time and by mandating a universal social skills curriculum.

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[1] At the building level, this included teachers, paraprofessionals, and support personnel, such as bus drivers, cafeteria workers, and secretaries.

Assessing Specific Needs

Each one of these programs conducted a strategic assessment of its current needs before implementing change. The schools visited (in the words of José Flores, Youth Coordinator at La Familia Counseling Service) "were not afraid to acknowledge what the issues were that affect their children." Discussing issues that were sometimes difficult without fear of judgment from others (e.g., the presence of drugs and weapons on campus or difficulty teaching students with special needs) was also seen as a vital part of the assessment process. As Gaustad (1991) has stated, "denial on the part of administrators can paralyze a district while problems become deeply entrenched [and] far more difficult to deal with than if faced at an earlier stage"(p.13).

Rather than finding existing programs and implementing them verbatim, school systems created new programs, or modified existing programs to address their individual needs. Westerly staff spoke of a "determined, data-driven, analytical process and evolution," that was child-focused, "listened to kids, families, and teachers," and "meld[ed] research with local needs." Project ACHIEVE and the EBS model built upon systematic analyses of local data that actively involved the members of the school community. These analyses led to programs that addressed needs at multiple levels and varied according to the intensity of the specific needs of children in various settings in their school. When school systems chose existing programs, they were programs validated through research and verified by data; and when the programs were adapted, it was with the support of an individual or group who understood the original programs and research-based tools and strategies.

Collecting and Using Data

An important component of each system was the ongoing collection and monitoring of data that indicate progress. Programs were not merely implemented and forgotten, but were continually examined to determine the impact that the interventions were having. For example, Phoenix Middle School and Lee Elementary School (both EBS schools) found, respectively, that office referrals increased prior to school vacations and that behavior was a problem during recess. By offering extra incentives during the month before school vacations and by teaching behavioral expectations for the playground, each school effectively addressed its particular problems.

Although many interventions focused on behavior, programs also collected data about changes in academic achievement and consumer satisfaction. These data were used to validate, as well as modify, the programs when necessary. For example, Jesse Keen Elementary School students have shown academic improvement on the California Test of Basic Skills. This Project ACHIEVE school is now off the "critically low" list. Participants thought that this process of collecting and using data was especially important for convincing less-than-enthusiastic participants of the value of the interventions.

Coordinating Services and Building Collaboration

A fourth element was the coordination of school activities and the active collaboration of the entire school staff and often of other stakeholders and community members. Each of the settings visited coordinated the services and supports provided to students and staff. Similarly, each setting involved its staff and frequently involved family and community members in the change process. The schools also provided common places where people, programs, and ideas could be focused around one common goal and provided stakeholders with the tools necessary to be a productive part of the group.

Collaboration at these schools involved people working together, negotiating and helping each other in an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect, rather than merely exchanging information. Teachers spoke of the positive impact of collaboration. A Westerly teacher stated that "learning to collaborate saved her as a teacher," while the district's Special Education Director (and others) emphasized that they "mean[t] it when they want[ed] to get parents involved."

This collaboration included district-level staff, as well. An itinerant school psychologist who worked with Jesse Keen stated that, "I can feel comfortable to throw out ideas for intervention and the teachers are receptive. They also come in with a problem-solving model and they're not looking for a quick fix. They're looking for ways to help this child learn better and learn appropriate skills for the classroom. The whole mentality from the administration, down is that we want to work with all the kids and want them all to be successful, and so we're going to do what we need to do to accomplish that. Here, I'm part of a team. I know that my testing may come down the road, but it would be in the best interest of the child."

Components of Effective Programs

Each of the programs shared common components. These components included the following: child-centered goals and orientation; a positive, supportive environment; a problem-solving approach; clear, consistent, and simple interventions and expectations; and prevention and early intervention.

Common Child-Centered Goals and Orientation

Staff at each of the programs shared common child-centered goals and orientations that included seeing every student as "their student." In the words of a Polk County school psychologist, staff at Project ACHIEVE schools "want all kids to be successful, to help them help themselves." All the schools visited focused on the strengths and needs of individual students. According to Westerly's Special Education Director, they "looked at the flaws in the organization, not the children." This child-centered orientation was reinforced by the results that staff observed, which, in the words of a Westerly school psychologist, enabled staff to "realiz[e] the difference that can take place in children" and enable administrators and policy makers to understand that "without support and programs…teachers would cry out to take children out and they'd probably have to do so." A teacher and consultant from the Lane School described this child-centered orientation in the following way: "(1) If you want respect, treat the students with respect; (2) have high expectations; (3) hold students responsible; and (4) don't waste time and energy worrying about social ills and breakdowns. You can't change it, so deal with what you have in front of you, and take one step at a time."

Program developers and school staff reiterated the importance of moving beyond labels and categories and looking at providing services for all children. They suggested that the lines between regular and special education became blurred when this goal was realized. One of Project ACHIEVE's developers, Howie Knoff, spoke of training "the whole school" so that all staff had the capacity to work with all students. While Westerly staff stated that, "if you truly believe we're building programs for success, the programs must be open to all kids with needs," a Westerly school psychologist observed, "we can't distinguish between the kids; kids are kids and they're all ours."

Positive, Supportive Environment

"Schools should be places where children and teachers want to be," the supervisor of Lane School said. His remarks were validated when everyone—from teachers and staff to students and their family members—told how they felt welcome and safe at Lane School. This was accomplished in many ways at Lane School, as well as in the other programs. For example, both the academic and behavior skills necessary to learn and be successful were part of the school curriculum. Teachers and other school staff took advantage of the "teachable moment" and used problem behaviors as a time to either teach or review skills rather than just administer punishment. Also, respect for self and others and responsibility were taught and modeled by all individuals within the schools.

While each setting was different, every school improved outcomes significantly, by providing students and staff with positive, supportive, and caring environments. To be successful, "you must have compassion, caring, and kindness, and really mean what you say and follow," stated Westerly's Special Education Director. To improve outcomes, each program examined the traditional structures and practices of its school (or schools in its system), and changed those that got in the way of creating child-centered, positive environments conducive to and supportive of learning. In addition, each school (and the program it employed) taught both students and adults the skills necessary to create and maintain safe, productive, and caring environments for all students. These approaches are consistent with research that emphasizes the importance of school climate (Gottfredson, 1997); the necessity of providing students with appropriate support that includes the teaching of appropriate skills (Colvin, Kameenui, & Sugai, 1993; Colvin, Sugai, & Patching, 1993; Sugai, 1992); and the indispensability of providing the adults with ongoing training and support to implement child-centered goals (Johns & Keenan, 1997; Osher & Hanley, 1996).

By employing these strategies, these schools created caring environments where students felt valued and where staff and students were able to develop caring relationships. Students and educators linked a caring environment and relationships with teachers to school safety. "Teachers should care more, don't put down students, and be nicer," a 7th-grade Lane County student at the Kennedy Middle School (a Second Step school) observed, while another student talked about the problems that occurred when students "get a feeling from certain teachers that they're here just for certain kids." The assistant principal at the same school observed that he could proactively intervene in the cafeteria because lunch time was organized to enable him and other staff to develop positive relationships with the students.

Westerly schools (according to the Westerly High School principal) created a "safe, orderly, secure climate" by recruiting staff with "people skills," who "like kids," and are "non-confrontational" and "pleasant," as well as by providing staff who needed skills in this area with training and supports. This allowed schools to build "compassion." "The big thing," one Polk County administrator said, was to, "have teachers and administrators who care about kids." Caring, however, was not just an individual attitude. Eileen, a University of South Florida School Psychology intern contrasted her experience in Project ACHIEVE with the her previous experiences in three settings: a Chicago neighborhood school, a self-contained school for children with serious emotional disturbance, and a residential treatment program. Project ACHIEVE "would make a huge difference to paraprofessionals and teachers," she said. While her colleagues [in the other settings] "were caring and capable, they didn't have training to work as an effective, united front." These schools created what one expert panelist, Jeff Sprague, co-director of the Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior, referred to as the "capacity to care."

Problem-Solving Approach

Each of the schools visited employed a strategic problem-solving approach to problem behavior and rejected reactive and punitive approaches. This problem-solving approach extended to staff. For example, as observed by a special educator, Project ACHIEVE "knocks down barriers and allows for sharing and being positive" by "bring[ing] people together, so everyone can admit what their problems are in their classrooms." Project ACHIEVE "is about problem solving—for kids, teachers, and schools," a 2nd-grade teacher observed.

This problem-solving approach was evidenced in many ways at each site. For example, one of the focus group members on Project ACHIEVE stated that he found it much more effective to have a "zero reject" attitude rather than a "zero tolerance" attitude and to provide students with the tools that enabled them to succeed. Similarly, EBS principals and teachers described problem-solving to address and prevent "zero tolerance behaviors." Westerly uses the planning centers to help students think through problematic behaviors; and a teacher from Lane School told how when students were sent to the office for discipline, they spent the time problem-solving with the supervisor. This problem-solving approach is supported by research that shows that the use of punishment alone can increase the negative behaviors in students with significant behavioral challenges (Noguera, 1995) and may actually increase vandalism, aggression, tardiness, truancy, and dropping out when used exclusively to address schoolwide discipline (Mayer & Sulzer-Azaroff, 1991). Further, research suggests that punishment is one of the least effective ways to reduce violent and antisocial behaviors in schools (Lipsey, 1991; Tolan & Guerra, 1994).

The school staff interviewed (as well as the expert panelists) viewed positive supports and problem solving as preventative and an alternative to out-of-school suspension. Almost every focus group identified out-of-school suspension as a potential problem and characterized supportive interventions as positive alternatives to suspension. "Talk to students instead of suspending them—suspension does not solve a problem; it's just provoking," said one Lane County student. Debra, a Lane County parent, agreed, saying that her son's "goal was not to have to go to school," and suspension rewarded him without teaching him. Howie Knoff of Project ACHIEVE offered a similar perspective: "If you consequate, you must educate" (which suspension does not do). Laura, a Lane County student who had three acquaintances suspended, agreed: "They're sent home [and they] just sat at home then. [It's a] dumb system to send them home if they're in trouble. They should still be at school. The point of school is to be here!"

Parents and school staff both viewed Second Step and Project ACHIEVE as preventive of suspension. Debra (the parent quoted above) and another Lane School parent, Billie, contrasted their children's positive experiences in the Lane School, which "worked on carrying through consistency and compliance" and where their children "learned social skills" and "that no means no," with their children's experiences in (non-Second Step) schools, where "there are security guards, police, knives, drugs and suspension is their answer." Nancy (a [illegible] School instructor who also consults with other schools within the Education Service District, [illegible]ding schools that lacked Second Step) characterized those schools as "crisis centered, which leads to punitive measures, suspension, Saturday school, etc." When asked which schools had in-school suspension programs, Howie Knoff replied, "not Jesse Keen Elementary School or Cleveland Elementary School. There's no need." Jan, the principal of the inner-city Tampa Foster Elementary School agreed, crediting the program for eliminating her school's "high suspension rate...and carry-over issues."

Expert panelists agreed that alternatives to suspension should focus on teaching skills necessary to be a part of the school rather than rejecting students from school. Further, students in the focus groups said that it was important to them when the adults in their school let them know what they were doing well and focused on providing positive consequences rather than just threatening them with punishment should they "screw up." These recommendations were consistent with research that suggests that out-of-school suspensions send the wrong message to students—specifically, that they are not wanted in school, that school attendance is not very important, and that they can escape or avoid their problems rather than work through them—and can serve to reward disruptive behaviors in students who don't want to go to school (Johns & Keenan, 1997). Also, out-of-school suspensions can contribute to poor grades and early school drop-out (Larson, in press; Wagner, 1991). Further, researchers examining office referrals and their consequences have found that:

- Consequences for office referrals are subjective, in that administrators are inconsistent with the type of consequences they use for offenses;
- There is an overrepresentation of males, African Americans, students from low socio-economic status homes, and students with disabilities (especially emotional/behavioral disorders) among those students suspended;
- Most suspensions are for noncompliance or disrespect and the fewest suspensions are for behaviors that threaten safety; and
- About half of all office referrals are made by a disproportionately small number of teachers (Skiba, Peterson, & Williams, 1997).

Researchers and practitioners have identified alternatives that are more likely than suspension to decrease or eliminate disruptive behavior and teach appropriate behavior. Prevention measures such as identifying and eliminating classroom- and school-based factors that are associated with high rates of office referrals (e.g., provided training in behavior management and effective teaching to teachers who disproportionately give high numbers of office referrals) are very effective (Skiba, Peterson, & Williams, 1997). Instructive consequences such as conflict resolution and peer mediation (Bodine, Crawford, & Schrumph, 1995), crisis intervention (Pilcher & Poland, 1992), school-based behavior management plans (Gottfredson, Gottfredson, & Hybl, 1993) and school-based problem-solving teams such as the planning rooms in Westerly (Short, Short, & Blanton, 1994) are promising alternatives to suspension.

Clear, Consistent, and Simple Interventions and Expectations

These schools allowed everyone a predictable structure by providing clear, consistent, and simple expectations, as well as tools for meeting these expectations. In each school, students and staff knew what was expected of them in expected situations and had been taught how to perform these skills. Westerly made a concerted effort to make the environment as similar as possible across grade levels in order to facilitate the smooth transition between grades and schools. Expert panelists, for example, commended the Project ACHIEVE and EBS models because of their "flexibility" and the fact that they provided a "simple program" (EBS) and "define[d] skills so that the adults know what they are and the children know when they've mastered them" (Project ACHIEVE). At Jesse Keen Elementary School, Stop and Think signs were ubiquitous, and the social skills that students learned were simple, clear, and aligned with what staff both taught and modeled. Staff at EBS schools that employed Second Step reinforced the Second Step lessons in their interactions with students. A special educator (at Jesse Keen Elementary School) described the impact of this clarity: "When everyone is trained in the same manner, the common ground raises the confidence level of everyone to deal with all the students," which enables students "to receive positive feedback from people other than just their teachers."

These interventions were also made clear to families. For example, Westerly provided elementary students with a list of expectations that parents received regularly, along with feedback on appropriate and inappropriate behaviors. Similarly, Project ACHIEVE schools employed a variety of strategies, including a video and weekly newsletters that informed parents of (among other things) the social skills that were being focused on in school. Finally, First Step to Success taught parents how to respond positively to the daily feedback that they received from the school, and the Lane School maintained close contact with each student's parents to discuss progress and how parents could become involved in helping their child.

Prevention and Early Intervention

Each site provided services for the prevention and early intervention of behavior problems. Jean, the Facilitator of Springbrook Elementary School in Westerly, described being "proactive at the elementary level to deal with problems before they get to the secondary level." A 4th-grade teacher at Jesse Keen Elementary School described the differences in her classroom since Project ACHIEVE when she talked about "reap[ing] the benefits of early training" for students. Hill Walker, a well-respected researcher and co-director of the Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior at the University of Oregon, stated that if he could give only one piece of advice, it would be that "money and other resources should surround the problems before they get to an unacceptable level." This money would be spent to (1) proactively screen all students to determine the need for more intensive and individualized selected interventions to address their behavior needs; and (2) develop and universally implement schoolwide programs to address the daily needs of all students.

While providing selected interventions to encourage appropriate behaviors in very young children believed to be at risk of developing serious behavior problems, these programs went further by providing an environment that supported appropriate behaviors among *all* students throughout their school careers. The supervisor of Lane School stated that, "Creating a civil and caring environment, and teaching skills necessary to be a part of that environment, are important factors in preventing the onset or escalation of behavior or discipline problems."

The preventative aspect of visible supervision—in the corridors, playgrounds, lunchroom, and other places where problems could arise—was raised by multiple focus groups, including many of the students. For example, Jeri, the lead teacher at Tampa's Cleveland Elementary School, is on duty every morning at the main entrance, monitors classrooms, and if she "notices a withdrawn or angry child," she asks to "take the child and work with him or her." Students believed that they felt safer and that many problems were prevented when adult supervision was evident throughout the school buildings, campuses, and buses, and when adults "[broke] up conversations that could escalate," anticipated fights, and helped students "talk it out." For example, an Oregon middle school student stated she felt safe in her school because the adults "make it obvious that they're there" and "pay attention to what's going on." Students spoke of the importance of where and when adults were around, for example, "teachers with hall duty, patrolling the locker bays between periods and before and after school." Students also pointed out that security guards could be more effective if they moved throughout the school rather than remain at certain stations.

This commitment to prevention and early intervention was strengthened when stakeholders expanded their conceptualization of prevention and its outcomes. We have "reached a critical mass of data on prevention programs that make a difference," Tony Biglan of the Oregon Research Institute observed, while noting that it was important to "coordinate with all agencies so they're speaking with a common voice." This was starting to happen in the sites visited. "Prevention and early intervention in early elementary schools is very important," Westerly's student assistance counselor observed, because there is "less resistance with younger kids" and "not enough adolescent in-patient and out-patient treatment facilities that are affordable and accessible." Similarly, in supporting Project ACHIEVE, Polk County administrators (in the words of co-director Howie Knoff) "really looked outside of the line-item mentality" and were "able to look at savings relative to vandalism costs, retentions, [and] potential due process hearings." Finally, First Step to Success and Second Step were driven by research data on the cost benefits of early intervention (Cohen, 1996).

Effective Approaches and Practices

The nine factors described and grouped above were crucial to the effectiveness of the different programs and schools. The programs' effectiveness was enhanced when they varied their intensity to match the specific needs of the students—an approach that is consistent with research on effective practice. Effective district and schoolwide interventions consisted of multiple levels of interventions, individualized to meet the needs of all students within the school or district setting (Furlong, Morrison, Chung, Bates, & Morrison, 1997; Rutherford & Nelson, 1995). Since inappropriate behaviors in schools have multiple causes (Quinn et al., 1998; Walker, Colvin, & Ramsey, 1995), staff at each site understood that one response, alone, would have little effect on the full range of challenging behaviors.

The sites visited provided for three distinct intensities of interventions:

- school or district-wide interventions to teach, communicate, and support behavioral expectations to the entire student body (prevention);

- more intensive interventions for students identified as being at risk for discipline problems (early intervention); and

- highly individualized and intensive services for students who presented more serious discipline problems (targeted interventions).

This multiple-level package of interventions has been proposed by expert practitioners and researchers as being a highly effective approach to addressing schoolwide discipline problems (Larsen, 1994; Walker, 1998; Walker et al., 1996). An examination of published school-based studies revealed that a "systematic, integrated approach to discipline management that provided a mix of activities that targeted the entire school, classrooms within the school, and individuals within the school would be most beneficial" (Gottfredson, Gottfredson, & Hybl, 1993, p.186). This approach allows for the incorporation of two important intervention principles:

- The intensity of the intervention must be commensurate with the severity or intensity of the problem behavior; and

- The effectiveness and efficiency of the individual student system depends on the effectiveness and efficiency of the schoolwide system (Gresham et al., 1998).

This section on effective approaches and practices discusses and provides examples of prevention, early intervention, and targeted intervention programs. In each approach, the elements of successful programs discussed in the preceding section of this report were evident.

Prevention

Recent research by Colvin, Kameenui, and Sugai (1993), and Taylor-Greene et al. (1997) suggests that with adequate universal prevention programs, about 80 percent of students at the elementary and middle school level will never present major behavior problems. Prevention—schoolwide approaches for creating safe and positive environments that prevent or minimize discipline problems among all students and all settings while allowing students to maintain their social competence—includes child-centered programs designed to create a civil environment that supports mutual caring and respect among students and staff. Schoolwide prevention programs provide students and school staff with a strong foundation for teaching and encouraging appropriate behaviors and provide a platform on which early intervention and targeted interventions can be more successful. The schoolwide prevention approaches observed during the site visits were all developed by building-wide teams, made up of staff members with different perspectives, whose responsibilities were to manage the development, implementation, monitoring and modification, and evaluation of the program. Schoolwide prevention increased appropriate behavior and decreased the frequency and intensity of inappropriate behavior for all students. In addition, schoolwide prevention increased the effectiveness of both early and targeted interventions.

The success of schoolwide prevention programs hinged on the following components (Mayer, 1995; Nelson, Carr, & Smith, 1998; Osher, 1996; Osher & Hanley, forthcoming; Reid, 1993; Sugai & Horner, in press):

- Clearly defined behavioral expectations;

- Consistent implementation of discipline procedures and well-defined and consistently-delivered consequences for behavior;

- Teaching of appropriate behavior to staff and students;

- Support for staff and students in achieving high behavioral and academic standards;

- Ongoing monitoring and dissemination of data collected to all staff;

- Positive recognition and public acknowledgment of appropriate behavior;

- Options that allow teachers to continue instruction when behavior problems occur and crisis intervention plans for dangerous behavior;

- Engaging student-centered instruction;

- Collaboration between regular and special educators and links to other school reform efforts;

- Collaboration with family, community, and service providers; and

- Leadership that is committed to serving all students.

The programs and schools visited created environments where students and staff felt a sense of caring, respect, and predictability. They created schools that were (in the words of a Lane County teacher from a school with a prevention orientation) "safe and predictable for kids who know what to expect: that they'll be treated with dignity no matter what happens, [and] that staff won't give up on them." Focus group discussions revealed that students and staff also felt as though they could ask for help without being fearful of judgment. The following vignettes provide two examples of programs that created successful environments to prevent discipline problems: the experience of an Effective Behavior Support (EBS) school in using data to develop, monitor, and revise an approach to improving students' behavior; and a simple approach to prevention and intervention that targeted the behavior of elementary school students.

Fern Ridge Middle School:
An EBS School Using Data to Create and Modify Schoolwide Programs

During school year 1993-94, teachers and administrators at Fern Ridge Middle School in Elmira, Oregon, realized that their school had become a negative learning environment for both teachers and students. These educators, determined to "save their school," came together to implement the EBS approach to develop a proactive schoolwide approach to discipline. As required by EBS, data were reviewed to create a pre-intervention reference point. They found that there were over 7,000 discipline referrals (sometimes more than 100 a week) processed by the main office during that school year. It became clear that the traditional set of consequences currently in use was not bringing about the desired changes in student behavior. To address this issue, the School Climate Committee (SCC) was formed during school year 1994-95.

Fern Ridge Middle School:
An EBS School Using Data to Create and Modify Schoolwide Programs (Continued)

Using their data, they developed a rough draft of behavioral expectations across school settings (especially those identified as most troublesome) to present to the school staff to build consensus. Following agreement upon these expectations, staff determined that it was their responsibility to create a detailed plan, developed by the SCC, and teach these expectations and the skills needed to meet them.

The SCC continued to collect data throughout implementation of the project. This ongoing data collection revealed that the EBS program was having a positive effect on behavior – the principal projects fewer than 2,000 discipline referrals for this year – and was used in planning program improvements. For example, examination of these data led to the addition of a program to teach 7th- and 8th-grade students how to avoid conflict.

Starting Early:
Clear, Consistent, and Simple Schoolwide Steps to Preventing Behavior Problems

Project ACHIEVE is a schoolwide prevention and intervention model that addresses the behavioral needs of all elementary school children. One component of this multifaceted program is the Stop and Think curriculum, which is integrated with the academic curriculum to teach students social and problem-solving skills. Rather than focusing simply on student behavior, Project ACHIEVE also emphasizes teaching and reinforcing instructional skills used by teachers that maximize students' academic achievement. The behavioral aspects of the Stop and Think approach are clear and simple, so they are easy for students to learn and follow. For example, Lindsay, a kindergartner, was able to list the steps for effective problem solving from memory.

Stop and Think is consistent enough to be used at home, in the community, in school, and in any situation a student finds she needs to "stop and think" to make a good choice. To ensure this level of consistency, staff, parents, and community members are trained to model the effective use of the same skills students are taught and encouraged to use. Teachers report that they find these skills helpful in their teaching and their personal lives. As consequences for inappropriate behaviors are also clear and consistent, both staff and students understand that negative consequences are the result of poor choices rather than the subjective whims of the adult. Incentives for making good choices are always in the building, as well, to serve as reinforcers. Research shows that effective and safe environments recognize a student's appropriate behaviors and provide at least five positive reinforcers for each negative consequence the student may earn (Mathur, Quinn, & Rutherford, 1996).

Early Intervention

While prevention programs provide a structured environment that decreases the frequency and intensity of behavior problems, they will not always be intensive enough to eliminate the problems of all students (Kauffman, 1997; Walker, Colvin, & Ramsey, 1995). Research suggests that approximately 10 to 15 percent of students may need more intensive interventions to help decrease high-risk behaviors (Colvin, Kameenui, & Sugai, 1993). Early intervention programs, then, are specifically designed to identify and address the factors that place these students at risk and to increase the positive interactions of students who are believed to be at risk of presenting more chronic discipline problems. By identifying early signs of behavior problems, schools can begin more intensive intervention programs to address these problems before they become significant. For example, Tobin, Sugai, and Colvin (1996) found that specific behavioral incidents that occurred during the first semester of 6th grade were predictive of later, more significant behavioral problems in 8th grade and throughout high school.

Early intervention often includes working with small groups or sometimes individual students to provide them the support necessary to demonstrate behaviors consistent with the expectations that the school and community set. Effective early intervention efforts often link children and their families to necessary community services or provide these services in the school. Westerly's planning rooms and the First Step to Success program incorporate early intervention measures.

Addressing the Needs of Students at Risk:
Planning Centers for All Students in Westerly, Rhode Island

The elementary and middle schools in the Westerly Public School District maintain planning centers within each building where all students can choose to get emotional support or "cool off," resolve conflicts, get assistance with school work, have a quiet space to work on homework, or work on problem-solving skills with an adult or on the computer. While all students can choose to come to the planning center throughout the school day, some students have written in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP) a class period or more time during the school day to spend in the planning center. The planning centers are staffed by an adult trained in behavior management. Planning center teachers can also help students and families access mental health or other community services when a need is identified.

The planning centers facilitate the early identification of, and intervention into, problems students are having; staff can then work with students to teach them coping and problem-solving skills to manage their difficulties. These centers also serve to prevent the escalation of inappropriate behaviors by addressing academic, emotional, or behavioral problems before they become crises. "The planning center," observed Joe, a 7th-grade student, "gives space to resolve conflicts." Combined with other programs, the planning centers have resulted in improved grades, achievement, and attendance and fewer disciplinary referrals, creating a positive, trusting learning environment that promotes high academic and behavioral expectations.

Including Parents in the Equation:
First Step to Success Empowers Parents, Teachers, and Students

Research shows that intervening in behavioral problems early and in multiple settings—both at home and school—is fundamental to the future success of a child at risk of developing antisocial behavior. One of the hallmarks of First Step to Success is the integration of parents to create a home-based component of the program. First, all kindergarten students are screened for indicators of emerging or existing behavior problems using a multi-method, multi-rater process.

Once a student is identified as needing a secondary prevention program, a consultant begins working with the student's regular classroom teacher to implement the school-based component of the intervention, called CLASS. The CLASS module consists of a short-term (1- to 2-month) intervention to remediate disruptive and aggressive behaviors. The duties of the consultant are gradually taken over by the classroom teacher, who then works directly with the student on the First Step to Success curriculum.

Including Parents in the Equation: First Step to Success Empowers Parents, Teachers, and Students (Continued)

After day 10 of the CLASS module, the home intervention module, HomeBase, begins, which runs concurrent to the CLASS module. The consultant meets the student's parents in their home (or other designated meeting space) 45 minutes per week for six weeks to teach parents the skills that will enhance their child's adjustment and success in school. Once consultants start working with families, they find that many parents start using the HomeBase lessons with all of their children.

The final phase of First Step to Success is maintenance. During this phase, concrete rewards are phased out and replaced with verbal praise, recognition, and other signs of approval. Teachers and parents have found that students who successfully complete the First Step to Success program show sustained positive behaviors over time and across settings.

Targeted Intervention

Research suggests that approximately 1 to 7 percent of students in our schools will have chronic problems with disruptive, destructive, or violent behaviors and will account for between 40 to 50 percent of the major behavioral disruptions at school (Colvin, Kameenui, & Sugai, 1993). For these students, a more intensive targeted intervention is necessary.

Targeted interventions should be highly individualized, provide a comprehensive array of services to support the students who display chronic and significant behavior problems, and may include special education for those students with eligible disabilities. These systems (in the words of a Lane School consultant) are " student-centered" and "provide support and resources so that staff can individualize services for each child." In addition, these systems support teachers and school staff in providing "immediate, relevant, effective, and efficient responses" to those students most in need (Sugai & Horner, in press) and should include and coordinate school and community-based resources (Adelman, 1996; Eber & Nelson, 1997; Osher & Hanley, 1996; U.S. Department of Education, 1994). Two examples of targeted intervention programs are the Westerly Integrated Social Services Program and Lane School.

Involving the Community to Improve Services for Children's Special Needs

The Westerly Integrated Social Services Program (WISSP) worked with the school and other community organizations to help Marcy, a high school senior. Marcy's teachers noticed that she had been late to school or skipping classes. When asked about her tardiness and missed classes, Marcy revealed that her father was terminally ill. His disease was degenerative and he was beginning to lose his mental faculties. Marcy came to school each day fearful that her father might take the wrong medication, take his medication incorrectly, or not heed his strict dietary restrictions. Working with the high school and with WISSP, Marcy was able to work out a partial day schedule so she could stay home with her father part of the day and then attend school for the rest of the day. They also helped Marcy arrange to take two courses at the community college she would need to meet graduation requirements.

When Marcy's mother was laid off and their car broke down, things went from bad to worse. WISSP mobilized to get the word out about this family's great financial need to the clergy of two local parishes. Together, they were able to collect close to $900 for Marcy and her family. This allowed them to pay for car repairs, tuition for Marcy's college courses, medical expenses, and food. Today, Marcy attends a bereavement support group at the WISSP Center to help her cope with her father's imminent death. This was just one example of what the integration of services can do to help students in need, no matter how great or small that need is.

Lane School:
A Place Where Kids Want to Be

The nature of the success in an environment such as Lane School, according to its supervisor, is "to make school a place where kids want to be, not force them to be there." The following letters were written by three students to describe why they like attending Lane School.

My name is Travis and I am in the tenth grade. I came to Lane School last spring, and liked being there from the first day I attended. The reason I came to Lane School was because of problems I was having in my home school. Kids at my home school used to tease me and "set me up" to do things that were wrong like tell me to drink someone else's pop, and then say how could you do that. They would talk behind my back, call me "Homey King," and say, "Look at that stupid Travis, he's acting so funny." At my home school my teachers didn't help me solve my problems. They said I was a behavior problem and had to solve it on my own. They just gave me a referral. "Here's another referral Travis," go to the office.

What I like about Lane School is the point system, the structure, the one-on-one attention where I can get help when I don't understand something. The teachers help me figure out ways to solve my own problems. They give you help and attention. For example, teachers at Lane School say things like, "How can we solve this problem, Travis?" I feel safe at this school because if someone ever tried to hurt me they would call the cops. They really care about me and want me to be safe. I enjoy the teachers saying "hi" to me in the morning. If I have a serious problem at Lane School, I know I can go to the teachers or principal. They will help me. They care for the students at Lane School.

I think they should have more schools like Lane School because they teach me right from wrong behavior and how to be successful in your home school.

. . .

My name is A.J. I am in the ninth grade. I have been in many schools; the only times I've been successful is when I've been in programs such as Lane School. These kinds of programs are what I need. Regular schools are not for me, and I know that's true for a lot of kids.

What I like about Lane School is the structure and authority. By structure I mean more one-on-one assistance, fewer kids, and clear expectations. Authority means close supervision. There is always a teacher in the classroom, sometimes two. Teachers don't allow students to pick on one another, get off-task, or get distracted by other students. They don't allow students to talk about things that shouldn't be talked about in school, like gang talk. Adults at Lane School supervise students closely. They are always listening and always around.

I liked Lane School from the first day I was there. The classes are smaller. I knew I would succeed in a program like that. The work is the same as in regular school, except you get more help on it. They don't treat you as "special" or anything like that. I get to do work at my own pace, and when I have problems I can get immediate help. I can go to any teacher or the supervisor at Lane School if I have a problem. When I have behavior problems, I get to tell my side of the story.

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Lane School:
A Place Where Kids Want to Be (Continued)

My name is Shawn and I am a ninth grade transition student at Lane School and go part-time to my home school, Elmira High School. I've been at Lane School a long time, but will be leaving soon. I'm doing much better now in school than ever before.

I came to Lane School because at my middle school I always would get in fights. Other kids picked on me, I wouldn't do homework, and I would cuss. Whenever kids would pick on me I would chase them or fight them. At Lane School I learned that fighting wasn't permitted. If you fought, there were serious consequences, like the police. I also learned that there are other ways of dealing with students when they provoke me. I now use words to solve problems, not fighting. Everyone at Lane School learns ways to control their anger, to calm down, and do problem solving. We take a class called Decisions where we learn to do those things. I now realize that I must have looked pretty stupid when I got out of control. I don't allow myself to do that anymore. I decided to change.

At Lane School I like the small classes. There are more teachers. You get more attention here. I like the one-on-one structure, and problem solving. When I have a problem, there is always someone to talk to. They care and help me out. There are no drugs in school, no violence, no smoking. The teachers keep a close eye on students. They don't allow kids to provoke other kids.

There should be more schools like Lane School in the U.S.A. Teachers here know how to handle kids with anger problems, regular schools don't. It's a smaller place where kids can get more help. At Lane School I learned the skills to deal with problems, and this helps me a lot when I go to my home school.

National, State, and Local Support of Community-Based Collaboration

Expert panelists and focus group members believed that community-based collaboration could be encouraged and supported by national, State, and local agencies. Their recommendations were consistent with *The National Agenda for Improving Results for Children and Youth with Serious Emotional Disturbance* (U.S. Department of Education, 1994), which targets systems change resulting in the development of coherent services built around the individual needs of children and youth with serious emotional disturbance; as well as with many research and policy reports and studies in education, child welfare, juvenile justice, and mental health (e.g., Osher & Osher, 1995; Stroul & Friedman, 1996).

Both expert panelists and focus group members stated that the common child-focused goal of promoting safer schools for all students should be evidenced and supported by school, district, State, and national policy, and the allocation of resources at all levels of the government. Successful efforts, they reported, were focused on and driven by the needs and strengths of children. Participants identified four key barriers to creating these kinds of systems in their schools:

- Time: "there's only so many things that can be done, so time is a real factor";
- Turf: "parochialism and territoriality" and "fears of losing funding and power";
- The "demarcation" made between regular and special education; and

- Lack of an "infrastructure" to support collaboration.

Both groups stated that State and national officials could address the barriers of time by reducing or aligning paperwork requirements; providing districts with the "flexibility needed to shape [interventions] to each district"; and modeling and facilitating collaboration between regular and special education and between education and other human services. One expert panelist, Hill Walker, researcher and co-director of the Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior at the University of Oregon, made the distinction between bureaucratic collaborations and community collaborations. Many expert panelists agreed with him when he stated that bureaucratically imposed restrictions made collaboration complex and difficult. He suggested that the role of national, State, and local agencies could be expanded beyond modeling collaboration to facilitating, supporting, and nurturing collaborations. He stated that in his experience, interagency collaboration was facilitated when collaborative efforts began "at the bottom" between professionals within different organizations.

While local collaboration is not an easy task (Adelman, 1996; Epstein, Quinn, & Cumblad, 1997; Friedman, Kutash, & Duchnowski, 1996; Skiba, Polsgrove, & Nasstrom, 1996), successful collaboration is possible. The focus groups revealed how local schools and agencies were starting to address the barriers posed by the lack of a common language, conflicting eligibility requirements, and even different definitions of problems and disorders by focusing on child needs. "After twenty years of collaboration," the director of Hillsborough County's drug prevention efforts observed, "we need to...look at what children need instead of just forming committees for different things." Marshall, director of a Eugene family support agency, observed that because schools and teachers "are with kids all day...they can be the most effective change agents." All the schools drew upon special education and safe and drug-free resources. In addition, in a manner that was shaped by local resources and needs, these schools also aligned with or drew upon resources from child welfare (e.g., family preservation), mental health (e.g., community mental health agencies), substance abuse prevention, and juvenile justice (e.g., juvenile workers).

Westerly, for example, coordinated with the local juvenile officers and mental health center staff, and employed resources from special education, the State Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program, and Project REACH, a statewide grant from the Center for Mental Health Services, to coordinate services between education, mental health, child welfare, and juvenile justice. Similarly, Cleveland Elementary School (a Project ACHIEVE school in Hillsborough County) worked with boys and girls clubs, as well as with local housing projects and businesses, to implement Stop and Think and to have them employ the same language that the school used. Finally, the EBS efforts were supported by the efforts of a local organization, Direction Service (funded though the State's welfare reform), to provide some students with additional behavioral supports and to train them in conflict resolution and problem-solving skills.

Identifying What Works and Disseminating Information

Both focus group participants and expert panelists suggested that national and State agencies identify and disseminate information about model programs so that, in the words of one public official, there could be "targeted intervention using proven programs; not just targeted children." The dissemination should provide schools and community-based groups with clear examples of effective programs and community collaboration, and use research to identify what works and for what types of schools and contexts each intervention is "appropriate." Expert panelists and focus group members emphasized that these examples should provide (in the words of expert panelist Colleen Bielecki, Director of Professional Issues for the Rhode Island Federation of Teachers) not just a "snapshot," but also details about the process and barriers faced during development and implementation, as well as follow-up data to depict the impact these programs had on children. Examples of this approach can be found in the research literature (Osher & Kane, 1993; Epstein, Quinn, & Cumblad, 1997; Friedman, Kutash, & Duchnowski, 1996; Skiba, Polsgrove, & Nasstrom, 1996).

Creating Training Opportunities

Training is important within schools, between schools and families, and among service providers. Agencies at all levels of government should facilitate collaboration by supporting cross-agency training and professional development. Expert panelists also stressed that it was important to extend opportunities to allow agency personnel to enable them to participate in interdisciplinary conferences and professional-development activities. Barbara Carranza, the Juvenile Justice Specialist for the Oregon Commission on Children and Families, emphasized that allowing people to attend only one conference a year means that they will likely opt to attend a conference in "their field." This practice, she observed, does not provide people with the information and understanding necessary to build collaborations and work effectively with colleagues from other fields: "only getting to go to one training a year means that you go in your niche, not to the broad conferences that could help you connect." Others stressed that these training opportunities should be ongoing and that there should be some provision for people to obtain more detail and follow-up help when needed. One expert panelist suggested that obtaining this training and support should be as simple as picking up a telephone and asking for it.

Providing Resources

Expert panelists and focus group members stated that targeting resources to promote and support collaboration was instrumental in making collaboration work. They stated that government agencies should commit money as well as the space, people, and time needed to support collaboration. Further, it was important that promised support be available when it was needed, and that community-based service providers should not have to wait or wade through paperwork and red tape when support was needed. While the level and intensity of support will vary by setting and program, expert panelists and focus group members cautioned against evaluating a program's effectiveness too soon, as program data may not show improvement for several years. For example, the Effective Behavior Support (EBS) model has been shown to require as much as 3 to 5 years to fully implement and realize its goals (Todd, Horner, Sugai, & Sprague, in press).

Expert panelists stated that it was imperative that agencies actively seek advice from practitioners, children, and families before determining the allocation of these resources. In addition, they recommended the effective blending of funds. The current practice of providing categorical resources, they suggested, could be improved upon by looking for ways to blend funds that would support interventions that benefit all children rather than just children who are labeled. The planning rooms at Westerly provide an example of how this was accomplished at a local level. While planning rooms might typically be available only to students with Individual Education Programs, at Westerly they were open to all students who felt they could benefit from assistance with academics or social problem solving. One student described how he could go to the planning center if another student was pestering him to settle the situation with either the planning room teacher or representatives from the Students As Mediators group. Together, they learned how to communicate to solve conflicts.

Challenges to Change

Change is (in the words of a number of Westerly focus group participants) "difficult and threatening", no matter how desirable the implied benefits might be. Expert panelists and focus group members pointed out some of the challenges they faced when implementing change and provided examples from their experiences of how they went about addressing these challenges. These challenges clustered around two distinct issues: implementing change and sustaining change.

Implementing Change

The main challenge faced by change agents is overcoming "the fear of change" and fostering a sense of true, honest collaboration and dedication from everyone involved in the change process. Expert panelists observed that some individuals felt "threatened by change," or feared that a great deal of effort would be required on their part and that it would inevitably translate to little improvement. Expert panelists, focus group members, and representatives from the programs emphasized that the key issue to making change possible is to provide everyone involved in and affected by the change efforts with the supports necessary to create an environment conducive to change. Perhaps not surprisingly, many of the supports identified as necessary to implementing change were also identified as essential components of effective programs, and include: leadership, a common goal, assessment of needs, training, communication, a positive atmosphere, engaging the community, and providing and leveraging local resources.

- **Leadership:** Each of these schools had strong "persistent" leadership that provided a vision. This leadership was not confined to the top (e.g., district superintendents, teachers union presidents, and school board members), but was evidenced across all levels (e.g., district staff, building principals, grade level chairpersons, and union representatives). Barbara, a special educator at Jesse Keen Elementary School, described the importance of leadership:

> "With regard to sharing, no turf guarding goes on here at all…between [special] and regular education. There's an idea here that we're all in this together. I think that starts from the administration. They're all our kids. It doesn't matter whether they're an SED kid in a full-time placement, or a regular ed child; they belong to all of us, so we're all going to support each other. It's okay to say, 'I have no earthly idea what else to try,' because there is going to be someone else to say, 'Why don't you try this?'"

Leadership supported "persistence and dedication," as well as "risk taking." Leadership nurtured an atmosphere where students and teachers could seek help without fear of judgment. Leadership, in the words of a Westerly school psychologist, created a "determined" setting, which was "child-focused," demonstrated "respect and trust," employed a "team approach," listen[ed] to kids, families, and teachers; and "meld[ed] research with local needs".

- **Common goal:** According to expert panelist Spencer Sartorious, a State Safe and Drug-Free Schools coordinator, the programs had a "common vision." They focused "on what they have to do in order to help their children succeed," observed José Flores, Youth Coordinator for La Familia Counseling Service. Each of these successful efforts to support safe schools for all children developed and rallied staff around common child-centered goals. In Westerly, for example, the expert panel (in the words of Sue Bowler, director of Project REACH) "could see love for children who have severe problems. [The model was] really about coexistence. From Joe (a middle school student) to the Superintendent of Schools, there's a common message and set of values."

  Johns, Carr, and Hoots (1995) contend that when individuals within a school feel that they are involved in planning and goal setting, a sense of team spirit and mutual ownership develops that is impossible to attain when management comes from the top down. To accomplish this, these schools determined their priorities for change and investigated how these priorities translated into everyday school practices. Westerly's efforts built on site-based management. Project ACHIEVE will not even begin implementation until at least 80 percent of the school staff agrees to the effort. And representatives from the Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior suggest that any effort to implement schoolwide change in behavior must be reflected as one of the school's top three goals on their state-mandated school improvement plan.

- **Assessment of needs:** "If you have a vision and you don't have a plan, it's only a dream; if you want to make your vision a reality, you need a plan," observed Mark Hawk, the Director of Special Education Services at Westerly Public Schools. These interventions should directly reflect the needs of the school and its students. "The focus is on what we can do to help a child immediately, which is why the linkages have been created," Hawk said, observing that "this place both has knowledge and uses it." Once the type and intensity of school needs were identified, each school designed or selected interventions to address these issues. Focus group participants, expert panelists, and the intervention research believed that a "one size fits all" approach to creating safe learning environments for all students was doomed to failure.

- **Training:** "If you want things to work, you have to have the adults doing what you want the students to do," a Westerly expert panelist observed. Expert panelists stressed that all staff—administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, substitute teachers, bus drivers, and other school-related personnel (e.g., cafeteria workers, secretaries, and custodial staff)—should be involved in the training. This training provided everyone with the skills necessary to effectively implement the change and promoted a sense of respect for everyone's expertise. Barbara, a special education teacher at Jesse Keen Elementary School (quoted above), described the impact of training: "The training that we've received though the years of association with Project ACHIEVE has raised the ability level of everybody in the school, so that most everyone is very comfortable dealing with special ed. kids at all levels. It makes including kids a lot easier, when their level of expertise is such that they don't hesitate. I'll have teachers actually come to me and [*ask* to have kids mainstreamed into their classes] ....

The more training you have, your level of confidence goes up, and then that snowballs in a very positive way."

- **Communication:** Open lines of communication seemed to play an important role in all the schools visited. "Clear communication…helps bring in everyone to participate and take ownership," observed Tim, director of Elementary Education in Westerly. Westerly applied this logic to everybody. It was "critical to get information out to the community and families, including the faculty, who may see a student's behavior, but may not understand the whole issue," observed Sally, a Westerly school psychologist and coordinator of the WISSP program. "Commonizing language," was essential to interagency efforts, the director of Hillsborough County's Social Service Network's Resource Center observed, while describing how social service agencies and Project ACHIEVE schools collaborated: "Systems change starts in classrooms…. [It] helps to educate policy makers and middle managers…. [The] problem solving model extends from the little kids all the way through adults and all of the policy makers and steering committees."

- **Positive atmosphere:** Traditionally, schools have viewed children with behavior problems as "bad kids" who should be punished. In the programs studied, behavior was seen as a teachable skill and was included in the curriculum. People told us that when the dialogue shifted from punitive, reactionary procedures, such as suspension and expulsion, to prevention of behavior problems, stakeholders began to see their roles as more proactive and no longer felt as limited by laws that regulate the punishment of certain groups of students. This fostered an atmosphere of "zero reject" rather than "zero tolerance," and of preventing and addressing "zero tolerance behaviors" rather than pushing out children. Staff at these schools were (in the words of a teacher at a Project ACHIEVE school) "positive with students and with one another — it's tiring and demeaning to focus on the negative all the time." Expert panelist Deborah Crockett, an Atlanta school psychologist and President of the National Association of School Psychologists, distilled her impressions of Project ACHIEVE as creating settings where "teachers and students can learn in an environment that's safe and supportive, which allows for all students to be involved with dignity and respect, and where discipline is not punitive and almost abusive."

- **Engaging the community:** It was felt that change was more effective when people and organizations other than school district employees participated. Two important groups were family members and community organizations, including local universities, mental health agencies, and law enforcement. The lead teacher at a Tampa Project ACHIEVE school (Cleveland Elementary School) stated that part of what her "at-promise school" did to create safe and drug-free schools was to enable teachers and staff to "go out into the community and work with parents … [and] community people" so that they "use the same types of language as we do at school" — the "home plus school equals success." Similarly, a Westerly school psychologist considered herself "a team member collaborating on everything … coordinating with families… collaborating with support teams… liaison[ing] with lots of agencies" in order to create a "seamless type of service delivery approach." In the words of expert panelist, George McDonough, Director of Rhode Island's Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program, the key to effective collaboration was "everyone working together," "thinking about the recipient of resources, not about the providers," and "not focusing on the problems of the child, but on strengths."

- **Providing and leveraging local resources:** As Annemieke Golly, the First Step to Success program coordinator, pointed out, dealing with behavior problems is tiresome to teachers, staff, and administrators; therefore, support must be readily available to reduce their work load and treat such programs as part of the curriculum rather than just another "add-on." Resources—money, support personnel, and services, and the time necessary to implement change—were imperative to effecting change at each of the schools visited. "If you want it, you have to be able to pay for it with money as well as space, people, time and all the other things that are needed to do it," expert panelist Sue Bowler (of Project REACH) observed. "It takes collaboration and a continuum of resources." These resources were located by linking general and special education resources, where appropriate, by redeploying resources which would otherwise be spent on costly restrictive placements (in the case of Westerly), and by leveraging local resources.

In each of these sites it was obvious that a concerted effort was made to identify and take advantage of unique opportunities within the school district and the surrounding community. Westerly, for example, recognized the importance of the strong American Federation of Teachers union leadership within the district. By collaborating and building a partnership between the union and the district, many more opportunities for growth and support became available. One result of this collaboration was Westerly's strong approach to staff development. By working together, union representatives and district administrators recognized the pivotal importance of staff development to successful change. To facilitate and ensure sufficient staff development, a commitment of $80.00 per teacher per year for staff development was written into teachers' contracts.

Jesse Keen Elementary School, a Project ACHIEVE school in Polk County, Florida, provided another example of leveraging resources. This school took advantage of its designation as a Full-Service School to provide important supports to the children and families of Jesse Keen, as well as to Project ACHIEVE's efforts within the school. Through the Full-Service School program, Jesse Keen received two days of in-school counseling services from a mental health counselor from a local community mental health center, funding for two parent educators for home visits and home-school collaborative efforts, a direct link with the Department of Child and Family Services to coordinate school and community-based social service activities, and the opportunity to expand its school clinic such that medical and dental services could be provided right on campus. All of this has helped expand the Project ACHIEVE partnership, to make Jesse Keen the central link for all students' educational, health and mental health, social service, and family needs. These resources are also especially important for students who have more serious behavioral and emotional needs—the type of needs that often require targeted interventions and a comprehensive and integrated program involving home, school, and community supports.

Finally, the projects in and around Eugene, Oregon, were greatly enhanced by a strong, long-standing collaboration between the local school districts and the University of Oregon. This collaboration, spanning more than 20 years, has facilitated a sense of trust between the local research community and the district, making the development, implementation, and modification of new programs and projects more effective. One example of the effectiveness of this relationship is the development of The High Five Program at Fern Ridge Middle School (Fern Ridge School District 28J). Teachers and one administrator from the school, determined to improve their school climate, enrolled in a class entitled "Effective Behavioral Support" through the College of Education at the University of Oregon. They worked with the professor, during and beyond the semester, to develop and implement a program that they hoped would "save" their school. The High Five Program has, in their eyes, made Fern Ridge Middle School a more pleasant place to work and to learn. The importance of this university/district relationship is highlighted in the acknowledgments section of Fern Ridge Middle School's High Five Program description, where administrators and staff acknowledge the professor as an integral part of their team whose leadership provided them with the direction they needed to improve their school climate.

Sustaining Change

While change can be difficult to bring about, it is perhaps most difficult to sustain over time. This issue of institutionalization has long plagued researchers and has been equally frustrating for change agents. This issue is complicated by the fact that many school districts look at the creation of safe learning environments for all children as (in the words of expert panelist Deborah Crockett) "an event" that must be hurdled rather than as an ongoing long-term responsibility. In each program, sustaining change was enhanced by choosing effective interventions, providing ongoing support and training, and regularly collecting and monitoring data.

- **Choosing effective interventions:** Sustaining change was greatly influenced by the initial success of the interventions. Both focus group participants and expert panelists agreed that efforts must be made to choose an intervention based on the needs identified by the assessment, and that relied on programs and techniques supported by data. Westerly informants spoke of "starting small and gathering programs and force and support" for interventions such as team teaching and the use of planning centers. "What loosens up money," the Special Education Director observed, "is when the programs work locally." Similarly, Ray, supervisor of school psychology from Pasco County, Florida, worked with an "advisory council to understand the research and knowledge base," so as "not to waste money on programs that don't work."

- **Providing ongoing support and training:** Training and support must be ongoing in order to sustain change. Expert panelists pointed out that necessary support might change to reflect the changing needs of service providers and the community. In addition, staff from Westerly and Project ACHIEVE emphasized the importance of "constant and intensive" follow-up training, as well as initial training for new staff members.

- **Collecting, monitoring, and using data:** "Consistency, strategy, and data…help to bring people to the table, to agree there's something that needs to be addressed," observed expert panelist Barbara Carranza, the Juvenile Justice Specialist from the Oregon Commission on Children and Families. Just as schools and communities must identify their needs before implementing interventions, they must continue to collect data to identify new needs and to determine whether their efforts are effective. Outcome data (e.g., behavior, academic performance, and consumer satisfaction) must be collected over time and examined to determine cost-benefits as well as to identify necessary program modifications. These data will help to communicate information regarding program effectiveness, accountability, and program evaluations (Gresham, et al., 1998). Since some changes can be subtle, these data allow stakeholders to be more thoughtful about what they have accomplished and often lead to a sense of accomplishment and success. Participants also pointed out that any success, no matter how small, should be celebrated.

Special Circumstances

The fifth, and final of the cross-site findings addresses the importance of examining special circumstances. When school districts or buildings conduct an assessment of their current needs, they need to look beyond the characteristics and needs of each building and consider special circumstances within society and their community. Expert panelists suggested examining:

- changes in society;
- changes in the community; and
- changes in the family.

Changes in Society

"What's happening here is no different than in any other part of the country, but there's truly a collaborative effort to do things here," Brenda Muhammad, Vice Chair of the Atlanta, Georgia, school board, observed after two days in Eugene. The sites visited were all experiencing the impact of poverty, social and economic change, and weakened social service systems. However, each in its own way developed and implemented effective interventions to help address the problems that challenge most American communities. Expert panelists thought that these changes directly affected the promotion of safer schools for all children. More children are at home alone and, with the possible exception of sports, there is a lack of organized after-school activities available to children. (See sidebar: *A Student's Observation of Extracurricular Activities in the School and Community*.) This lack of supervision, as well as truancy, suspensions, and school drop-outs, were thought to directly relate to the increase in substance abuse and gang activities in children, especially younger ones.

A Student's Observation of Extracurricular Activities in the School and Community

There's some cult thing about believing you're in a gang. People are more verbal about it now, and it's become the basis of their lives. If there were more constructive things to do around Westerly, like go to the movies, or different things to get involved in, [it would help]. If teachers found out about a student in a gang, then they could form constructive activities to do with adults, to show those kids it's just an empty road to go down.

There are things to do after school, but not the right kind of stuff those kids might want to be involved in. Like sports…only a certain [number of students] can play. If they had other things if you just want to play, you can. I never hear about any extra things or extra intramurals, [like] a place you can go after school to do homework where you don't have to be made fun of, or open up different parts of the gym for people to use.

Changes in the Community

Expert panelists stressed that changes in the community had a great impact on schools and that any program designed to meet the needs of children had to consider the current characteristics of their community. In addition, expert panelists repeatedly stressed that school districts should strive to be culturally and linguistically sensitive and competent. This would involve developing programs that address the needs of students in ways that consider their cultural backgrounds, as well as communicating with their families in the language with which they are most comfortable. One expert panelist further stressed that "outside" programs might be more effective if they were implemented by people within the local community that shared the experiences and cultures of the children enrolled in the schools.

Data reflecting changes in the number of students participating in the free and reduced-cost lunch program, as well as changes in the number of students transferring into and out of the district, might indicate changes in the economic prosperity of the community. Westerly provided an example of how changes in the makeup of the community affected its design and implementation of programs. School officials recognized that the addition of a nearby casino was likely to affect their community. Although the casino provided members of the local community with jobs, there was also an influx of professional casino staff and their families settling in the Westerly School District. Most of these new community members came from larger cities such as Ocean City, New Jersey, and Las Vegas, Nevada, where youth involvement in gangs was more prevalent than in Westerly. The urgency of addressing the needs of these and other young people was acknowledged and addressed by Westerly staff.

Changes in the Family

Schools must be sensitive to changes in the makeup of the American family. Families are more diverse today than in the past, with more single-parent families and more families that, for economic reasons, force both parents and sometimes older children to work. This directly influences the amount of involvement that parents and other family members can have with the schools and the support they require to facilitate their active participation. Issues such as homework policies (e.g., assigning homework that does not require the assistance of a parent to complete) and the scheduling of conferences and other school events to suit the work schedules of parents must be considered. Believing that parental understanding and involvement was key to success, each school (and program) developed mechanisms to build on the strengths and accommodate the needs of families — in order to achieve what expert panelist Karen Peoples of East Tampa's Child Development Council described as a "dream longing to come true that parents and teachers work together for the betterment of children. Barriers can be broken down, families can start working closely with schools, and parents can get more involved with teachers and their children's education," this parent observed in her synthesis of her Project ACHIEVE visit.

Conclusion

Three researchers from American Institutes for Research's Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice, and expert panels of stakeholders that included a youth mentor, parents, a school bus driver, a teacher, a teachers union representative, two former principals and a former superintendent, a school board member, prominent researchers, local and State officials from education, mental health, and juvenile justice, and representatives of the U.S. Department of Education visited 10 schools at three sites that were experiencing many of the challenges that face American schools today. Focus group participants provided powerful descriptions of their experiences in dynamically changing schools and programs.

While the programs and sites were situated in specific communities, both the programs and their underlying principles could be generalized to many. One participant, Professor Rob Rutherford of Arizona State University, "came in as a skeptic, not because of what I've read or the components; rather, about replicability," fearing that it was "more of a personality-driven project." He left, "impressed that the project can happen in any school," as the program, which "obviously works...was validated by so many different people." Other expert panelists agreed. "How can I bring [this] to the attention of people of Atlanta?" asked Brenda Muhammad, the organizer of Mothers of Murdered Sons and Daughters and Director of Atlanta's Victim Assistance Program, as well as the Vice President of Atlanta's School Board. While Rutherford was "most impressed with the regular classroom teachers," Muhammad was impressed by the "beauty of students thinking so highly of a program" and of the fact that parents had "someone who cared and didn't have to wait until their children got in contact with the juvenile justice system, before they got support."

The expert panelists understood the "weariness in dealing with behavior problems," the pull of what a Lane School teacher characterized as "a zero-tolerance mentality," and the fact that some administrators "don't want to build support for kids." Still, the expert panelists were persuaded that what they observed was cost effective and could be replicated and built to much greater scales. The programs that the expert panelists learned about were, in the words of the University of Oregon's Jeff Sprague, "flexible and replicable."

The programs and the schools visited reflected a set of underlying principles, which Sprague distilled as "stop blaming kids and focus on the context of the behavior, especially when you're dealing with labels." These principles were:

- Safe schools are everybody's business. Administrators, staff, and students must all understand the rules and their consequences. The first step to a safe, drug-free, and effective learning environment is a schoolwide commitment to good behavior.

- Safe schools are one family. Regular and special educators and students are all part of the school family. Discipline and positive behavior supports and activities should involve all staff and students.

- Safe schools are caring schools that value and respect all students. Safe schools build and support staff capacity to be caring and to address the diverse needs of all students.

- Safe schools have high academic standards and provide students with the support to achieve these standards. Children who learn well, behave well. Many behavior problems are partly the result of academic failures and frustrations.

- Safe schools have high behavioral standards and provide students with positive support to achieve these standards. Well-trained teachers with administrative support can create positive environments that promote appropriate behavior and development.

- Safe schools are strategic schools. They assess needs, develop and implement research-based strategies, and coordinate services to address the needs of all students.

- Safe schools combine three approaches: schoolwide prevention efforts for all students; early intervention for students who are found to be at risk of behavioral problems, and targeted individualized interventions for students with severe behavior problems.

- Safe schools view the school as part of the larger community. They bring in the parents, mental health and other social service agencies, businesses, youth and juvenile justice workers, and the other community services and players to build safe schools and communities.

Alternatively, schools can be ineffective, crisis-driven settings, which fragment services and fail to provide students with the differentiated academic and behavioral support that they need to achieve high academic and behavioral standards. Such schools are characterized by high rates of disciplinary referral, coercive disciplinary practices, and high suspension rates, all of which are related to high drop-out rates, particularly for economically disadvantaged students, students of color, and students with learning and, especially, behavioral disabilities (Adelman & Taylor, 1994; Coalition for Cohesive Policy in Addressing Barriers to Development & Learning, 1998; Cooley, 1995; Ekstrom, Goertz, Pollack & Rock, 1986; Skiba, Peterson, & William, 1997; Wagner, 1991). In contrast, this study found that schools can also be effective learning environments that proactively address the barriers to students meeting high academic and behavioral standards (Cotton, 1995; Dwyer, 1996; Keenan, 1997; Levine & Lezotte, 1990; National Association of State Boards of Education, 1994; U.S. Department of Education, Office of Education Research and Improvement, 1993; U.S. Department of Education, Office of Research, 1994). This report examined 3 effective programs as they were implemented in 10 schools: Westerly, Rhode Island's, system-wide efforts at creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment for all students; Project ACHIEVE in two Florida counties; and Lane County, Oregon's, programs, including EBS, Second Step, First Step to Success, and Lane School.

While each of these interventions was studied in particular settings, research documents that they can, with modification, be replicated in other environments. For example, many schools successfully employ schoolwide positive behavioral supports in a manner similar to EBS (Council for Exceptional Children, 1997; Nelson, Crabtree, Marchand-Martella, & Martella, 1998). Similarly, other schools and districts employ coordinated individualized supports, such as those seen at Westerly, to provide intensive services for students with emotional and behavioral problems (Eber & Nelson, 1997). Further, other districts provide high-quality alternative educational settings which, like Lane School, have the ability to support students' learning and successful transition back into mainstream environments (Osher & Hanley, forthcoming; Quinn & Rutherford, 1998). Finally, three of the programs have been successfully replicated: First Step to Success is being applied across

Oregon; Second Step has been adopted in every State in the United States, including districts such as the Los Angeles Unified School District and Warren County, Kentucky, schools; and Project ACHIEVE is being employed in, among other places, Baltimore, Maryland; Dallas, Texas; and Cleveland Heights, Ohio.

"I'm tired of hearing what's wrong with children; I want to know what's right," Ray, supervisor of school psychology for Florida's Pasco County, observed, while noting that, "by studying healthy children we can learn about programs for all children." This collaborative study represents a similar effort; it followed the recommendations of the national meeting (described in the section on Methodology) and involved visits to what might be conceptualized as "healthy schools" to learn about schools that are safe and effective for all students. Both individually and collectively, the schools (and programs) examined demonstrated that all teachers and staff – regular and special educators, bus drivers and paraprofessionals, administrators, and student service personnel – can join with students, families, and communities to create safe environments that work for all students.

> *"These are our kids! This is our future. I don't want the leaders of tomorrow at Westerly to have been kicked out of school at age sixteen."* (Nancy, a Westerly School Committee Member, explaining her commitment to Westerly's efforts to work with all students.)
>
> *"Other principals needn't feel helpless when in an inner-city school. Project ACHIEVE creates persistence, offers a common language, and involves the community. [You've got to] stop suspending and start teaching skills. This eliminates feelings of helplessness."* (Jan, the formerly "intimidated" principal of Foster Elementary School in inner-city Tampa.)
>
> *"While it takes time, there's so much value in these connections and collaboration; so much strength and power in people coming together – within the school and between schools, between regular and special education – for the needs of all students. [District] 4J, the University of Oregon, the State Department [of Education], and other agencies are all coming together to improve things for students."* (Ginger, principal of Eugene's Patterson Elementary and Family School – a school which employs First Step to Success, Second Step, and EBS, as well as a "proactive" family outreach program, a cooperative pre-school, and a soup kitchen, to meet the needs of a school which serves many socially disadvantaged students.)

These three statements distill the lessons of the national meeting, the 3 site visits, the 18 focus groups, the 3 expert panels, and the literature review: all children can and must be served; schools can be turned around and a capacity to care for students and to support their development can be created; and child-focused collaboration – among families, researchers, regular and special educators, and other agencies – is necessary to realize the potential of every child, parent, educator, school, and community.

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Appendix A

National Meeting Participants And Site Visit Expert Panelists

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Robert Rutherford
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Arizona State University
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Educational Programs in Eugene, Oregon
March 5-6, 1998

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Youth Coordinator
La Familia Counseling Service
Hayward, CA

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Director, City of Atlanta Victim Assistance Program, &
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Appendix B

Program Materials

The following pages contain information on each program visited, and references to copyrighted materials about each program.

Westerly Public Schools

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Project Materials:

Keenan, S., McLaughlin, S., Denton, M. (1995). Planning for inclusion: Program elements that support teachers and students with emotional/behavioral disorders. *Highlights from the Second Working Forum on Inclusion*. Reston, VA: Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders.

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See following pages for reproducible materials.

WESTERLY INTEGRATED SOCIAL SERVICES PROGRAM

Vision:

To promote all students' success in school and enhance the quality of life for all families in the community

Mission Statement

To provide students and families health, education, and community services by bringing regional resources into the school.

Westerly High School
23 Ward Avenue
Westerly, RI 02891
Phone (401) 596-6856

WISSP
Westerly High School
23 Ward Avenue
Westerly, RI 02891

Place
Stamp
Here

- •ALATEEN
- •Linda Norton, Spiritual Counselor
- •Debby Musto, Therapist
- •VNS Hospice/Teen Parenting
- •Kathy Kerns, Spiritual Counselor
- •South Shore Mental Health Center
- •RI Dept. of Child, Youth, & Family
- •Westerly Police Department
- •So County Child & Family Consultants
- •Women's Resource Center of South Cty.
- •Sympatico, Inc./Marathon
- •Westerly Teen Center
- •DAPAC
- Edison Tutorial
- •University of RI
- Westerly Town Council
- Project Reach/CASSP
- Westerly/Pawcatuck YMCA
- Christ Espiscopal Church
- Family Services, Inc.
- •Westerly School Department
- The Samaritans
- •Department of Special Education
- RI Rape Crisis Center
- JOY-O-LOONS
- Westerly Hospital
- Rhode Island Foundation
- Westerly School Committee
- Substance Abuse Task Force
- Neighborhood Crime Watch
- WERI Radio Station
- Warm Shelter
- The Providence Center
- •WHS Business Department
- Coastal Neurology
- •WHS Community Outreach
- •School to Work Program
- Health Center of South County
- Literacy Volunteers of America
- Connecticut Department of Education
- Expressive Arts Therapies Center, Inc.
- •Psychology Associates of Westerly
- •CIS/CES
- RI Department of Education
- Associated Psychotherapy Services, LLC
- •South County Community Action
- United Way of SE New England
- •Non-Profit Resources of New England
- •Brown University Educational Alliance
- •Immaculate Conception Church
- •Town of Westerly Juvenile Hearing Board
- •RI Student Assistance Program
- Connecticut Behavioral Health Associates
- •Limited English Proficiency Program
- •Wash.Co. Adult Learning Center

ervices provided on site

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WISSP is formed

In 1993, Westerly High School's CAST (Classroom Alternative Strategies Team) recognized a need to increase social services for the larger at-risk population within the high school. They recognized that many students who may benefit from short term intervention to learn coping strategies for life's adjustment issues often do not receive these services, largely due to their lack of availability. As a result, students' academic performance and social/emotional growth is compromised.

Advisory Council:

Rev. Robert Anthony, Christ's Church
Ms. Pam Ardizzone, LEP Program
Mr. William Barney, Social Worker
Mr. Barry Cole, Westerly Town Council
Mrs. Carol Crandall, WHS Teacher
Mrs. Nancy Dodge, School Comm.
Mrs. Elita Giorno, Westerly Seniors
Mr. James Guarino, WHS Guidance
Dr. Mark Hawk, Dir., Spec. Ed.
Mr. Larry Hirsch, Business Owner
Det. Steve Iacoi, Westerly PD
Mr. Richard Latham, RIDE
Dr. Bernard Marzilli, School Phys.
Mrs Sally Mitchell, WISSP Coord.
Mr. James Murano, WHS Principal
Mrs. Barbara Swanson, School to Work Coord
Mrs. Nancy Turco, RN/NT, Union Rep.
Ms. Laquetta Pierce, Pres. Teen Ctr.

Services through WISSP include:

- Individual counseling
- Evaluations
- Psychoeducational groups
- Referral Network
- Tutoring
- Interagency Collaboration
- Community Service
- Workshops

WISSP Services are:

- **Coordinated**
- **Accessible**
- **Affordable**
- **Professional**
- **Confidential**
- **Convenient**

Teen Hotline
(Available Soon)

Where we are now:

WISSP is supported by the Rhode Island Foundation, the United Way of Southeastern New England, and the Rhode Island Departments of Health and Education. A joint resolution between the Town Council and School Committee, further supported by the State Child Opportunity Zone (COZ) initiative, resulted in securing 4 office spaces within the High School to provide supportive services.

WISSP is guided by:

- **Advisory Council**
  Town, School, Community, and Families
  Meet approx. 8 times/year
- **Service providers**
  Meet 2nd Wed. of each month at 1pm.
- **Teen Committee**
  15 students that meet bi-monthly
- **Parent Network**
  Meet on an AD HOC basis

All meetings are held in the WISSP Center Conference Room

Your involvement is encouraged and greatly appreciated
Any and all donations will be greatly appreciated

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Project ACHIEVE

Contact Information:

Drs. Howie Knoff and George Batsche
Co-Directors
Institute for School Reform, Integrated Services, and Child Mental
Health and Educational Policy
School Psychology Program, FAO 100U, Room 268
The University of South Florida
Tampa, FL 33620-7750
(813) 974-3246

Program Materials:

Batsche, G. M. & Knoff, H. M. (1995). Best practices in linking assessment to intervention. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.), *Best practices in school psychology-III* (pp. 569-586). Silver Spring, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

Knoff, H. M. (1995). Best practices in facilitating school-based organizational change and strategic planning. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.), *Best practices in school psychology-III*. Silver Spring, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

Knoff, H. M. (1995). Best practices in organizational assessment and strategic planning. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.), *Best practices in school psychology-III* (pp. 239-252). Silver Spring, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

Knoff, H. M. (1995). Best practices in personality assessment. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.). *Best practices in school psychology-III* (pp. 849-864). Silver Spring, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

Knoff, H. M. & Batsche, G. M. (1991). *The Referral Question Consultation process: Addressing system, school, and classroom academic and behavioral problems.* Tampa, FL: Authors.

Knoff, H. M. & Batsche, G. M. (1993). A school reform process for at-risk students: Applying Caplan's organizational consultation principles to guide prevention, intervention, and home-school collaboration. In W. P. Erchul (Ed.), *Consultation in community, school, and organizational practice* (pp. 123-148). Washington, DC: Taylor and Francis.

Knoff, H. M. & Batsche, G. M. (1995). Project ACHIEVE: Analyzing a school reform process for at-risk and underachieving students. *School Psychology Review, 24*(4), 579-603.

See following pages for reproducible materials, as well as additional references.

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USF

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Project ACHIEVE:

School Reform Towards Academic Achievement and Violence Prevention

School Psychology Program
College of Education
University of South Florida

Overview

Project ACHIEVE is an innovative educational reform project that emphasizes building-based prevention and intervention programs and that targets academically and socially at-risk and underachieving students. Project ACHIEVE places particular emphasis on improving the social behavior of students, increasing student performance in the areas of social skills and aggression control, and in reducing incidents of school-based violence. In addition, Project ACHIEVE provides training to maximize students' academic and social progress such that (a) students with potential problems receive early intervention services that reduce the need for later special education or disciplinary placements, and (b) students already receiving special education services can receive them in the least restrictive setting possible with the potential for an eventual return to the regular classroom without needing support services. Project ACHIEVE is implemented through an integrated process that involves organizational and resource development, comprehensive in-service training and follow-up, and parent and community involvement all leading to direct and preventive services for at-risk students. Originally implemented in the Polk and Hillsborough County (FL) School Districts, there are now over 20 Project ACHIEVE sites across the country.

Results

In Polk County, site of the longest running Project ACHIEVE school, the major accomplishments have been: (a) a 75% decrease in student referrals to special education, (b) a 67% decrease in student placements in special education, (c) a 28% decline in total disciplinary referrals to the principal's office, (d) a decline in student grade retentions from 6% of the total student population to .006% of the student population, (e) a decline in out-of-school suspensions from 9% of the student population to 3% of the student population, (f) an increase in the number of students scoring above the 50th percentile on end-of-the-year achievement tests, especially for

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those involved at the youngest ages, (g) an improvement in teachers' perceptions of school climate, and (h) academic improvements for those students whose parents were trained in the Parent Drop-In Center. An article summarizing the first four years of Project ACHIEVE's outcomes is forthcoming in the School Psychology Review.

National Recognition of Project ACHIEVE

- One of five programs across the country to be funded by the Metropolitan Life Foundation's **Positive Choices: Youth Anti-Violence Initiatives** program in the Fall of 1995 for $100,000.
- Received Honorable Mention in the Coalition on Educational Initiatives' and USA TODAY's Community Solutions for Education national awards program, May, 1995. The Coalition on Educational Initiatives includes Apple Computer, Inc.; Proctor & Gamble; State Farm Insurance Companies; and Subaru of America, Inc., and over twenty national professional associations.
- Designated as the best Model Student Services Program in Florida by the State Department of Education in its "Promising Programs and Practices" competition for 1994-1995
- Highlighted on the ABC News' 20/20 program "Being Teased, Taunted, and Bullied" on April 28th, 1995
- Featured at the April, 1995 National Education Association Safe Schools Summit in Los Angeles
- Invited for presentation at the National Education Goals Panel/National Association of Pupil Personnel Service Organization's "Safe Schools, Safe Communities" meeting in Washington, D. C., October, 1994
- Project Co-Directors awarded the "Outstanding Educators Award" from the Florida Association of Student Services Administrators, 1993
- Recipient of over $2.5 million in external Federal and State grants (Department of Education) over the past five years

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BASIC INFORMATION

A. Project Title: Project ACHIEVE: A Collaborative, School-Based School Reform Process Improving the Academic and Social Progress of At-Risk and Underachieving Students

Contact People: Drs. Howard M. Knoff and George M. Batsche, Co-Directors
Institute for School Reform, Integrated Services, and Child Mental Health and Educational Policy
School Psychology Program, FAO 100U, Room 268
The University of South Florida
Tampa, FL 33620-7750

(813) 974-3246/ FAX: (813) 974-5814

B. Project Overview

Project ACHIEVE is an innovative educational reform program targeting academically and socially at-risk and underachieving students. Project ACHIEVE began as a district-wide training program for school psychologists, guidance counselors, social workers and elementary-level instructional consultants. Project ACHIEVE focuses on helping individual schools to strategically plan for and address their immediate and long-term student needs. Project ACHIEVE places particular emphasis on improving the social behavior of students, increasing student performance in the areas of social skills and aggression control, and in reducing incidents of school-based violence. In particular, this is done through an integrated process that involves organizational and resource development, comprehensive in-service training and follow-up, and parent and community involvement all leading to direct and preventive services for our at-risk students. There are seven (7) components to Project ACHIEVE. These are: (1) Strategic Planning and Organizational Analysis and Development; (2) Referral Question Consultation Process (RQC); (3) Effective Classroom Teaching/Staff Development; (4) Instructional Consultation and Curriculum-Based Assessment; (5) Behavioral Consultation and Behavioral Interventions including the school-wide and parent/community use of social skills (or problem-solving) and aggression control training, (6) Parent Training, Tutoring, and Support; and (7) Research and Accountability.

Project ACHIEVE's training is facilitated by pupil services personnel and involves regular and special education teachers, paraprofessionals, bus drivers, school staff (custodial, cafeteria, office), substitute teachers, and volunteers. In addition, the training is extended to and utilizes parent involvement and community agencies (after care facilities, community-based programs). A unique aspect of the training is the use of a "training of trainers" format designed to increase the number of individuals (particularly pupil services personnel) who can train others within the school district and the community.

C. Goals

Project ACHIEVE is an innovative educational reform program targeting academically and socially at-risk and underachieving elementary school students. Project ACHIEVE's goals are accomplished by involving (a) school staffs in a comprehensive strategic planning and staff development process, (b) building-level students in interventions that prevent and respond to school discipline and social skills problems, and (c) students' parents in school involvement activities at school and parenting and schoolwork support activities in the home.

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As implemented, Project ACHIEVE has six primary goals:

1. To enhance the problem-solving skills of teachers such that effective interventions for social (in particular violence) and academic difficulties of at-risk students were developed and implemented.

2. To improve the building and classroom management skills of school personnel and the behavior of students (reduce antisocial, increase prosocial) in order to create a disciplined environment within which to learn (increased academic engaged time) through the use of a building-based social skills and aggression control training program.

3. To improve the school's comprehensive services to students with below-average academic performance such that they are served, as much as possible, in the regular classroom setting and have equal access to high quality educational programs. This goal is based on the assumption that students who can succeed in an environment are less likely to act out against that environment. Violence prevention/intervention programs must address the academic component of educational settings.

4. To increase the social and academic progress of students through enhanced involvement of parents and the community in the education of their children, specifically through their direct involvement with schoolwork of their children and youth through the development of improved parenting skills and community-based academic support activities.

5. To validate the various components of Project ACHIEVE and to develop demonstration training sites for district personnel in expanding this model to other school settings.

6. To create a school climate in which each teacher, staff member, and parent believes that everyone is responsible for every student in that building and community.

D. Target Population

Project ACHIEVE is implemented in schools with a high number of at-risk children and youth. These include school-wide Chapter 1 schools, schools participating in Full-Service school programs, schools with large numbers of special education referrals each year, and schools at-risk for multiple incidents of violence. At the present time approximately 80% of the schools participating in this project are Chapter I school-wide or Full-Service schools. There are two districts participating in Project ACHIEVE in the Tampa, Florida area. At the present time, nine schools from the two districts are participating.

Grade/Age Range:	Pre-K through Middle School
Number of Students:	5500

E. Services Provided

The Project provides direct training of school-based and community personnel in the following areas: 1) problem-solving; 2) social skills and anger replacement training; 3) effective teaching/instruction; 4) curriculum-based assessment; 5) parent education and training in social/academic behavior; 6) organizational planning, development, and evaluation.

School-based services for students (in addition to the staff training noted above) include: (a) school psychological; (b) counseling ; (c) mental health consultation; (d) parent educator; (e) school-based health; (f) child protection/public welfare; (g) special education; (h) speech/language; (i) specialized educational (e.g. reading discovery); and (j) computer assisted instruction.

F. Background, Foundation, and Theoretical Framework

Project ACHIEVE evolved after the Project Directors had worked for a number of years as consultants to numerous school systems providing individual workshops to the pupil personnel staffs in different areas of service delivery to at-risk and underachieving students. Eventually, it was decided that these students would be better served if the information was synthesized into a comprehensive service delivery system implemented at the building level. Over time, it was recognized that the service delivery system required a "school reform" focus in order to maximize student, educator, and parent acceptance and program efficacy.

Project ACHIEVE's foundation is based on an integrated process that involves organizational and resource development, comprehensive in-service training and follow-up, and student, parent, and community involvement all leading to direct and preventive services for at-risk students and buildings. More specifically, Project ACHIEVE uses an empirically-based, best-practices approach delivered through seven interdependent program components:

1. **The Strategic Planning and Organizational Analysis and Development Component** (Knoff, 1995; Malen & Ogawa, 1990; Steiner, 1979; Valentine, 1991) uses systematic strategic planning to assess targeted facets of the organization; to identify organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats; to generate specific programmatic objectives and action plans; and to coordinate evaluation procedures that measure goal progress and attainment.

2. **The Referral Question Consultation Process (RQC) Component** (Knoff & Batsche, 1991) uses a systematic, problem-solving process which provides the foundation to every consultation interaction whether child-focused, teacher- or parent-focused, or program- or system-focused. This processes focuses on explaining why student problems are occurring and on functionally linking assessment to intervention, resulting in real student progress.

3. **The Effective Classroom Teacher/Staff Development Component** (Berliner, 1988; Ysseldyke & Christenson, 1993) focuses on developing and reinforcing those classroom-based teacher/instructional behaviors that maximize students' time on task, academic engagement, and academic learning time. This includes the development and supervision of those behaviors that help to effectively match students with specific and effective curricula.

4. **The Instructional Consultation and Curriculum-Based Assessment Component** (Carnine, Granzin, & Becker, 1988; Penner, Batsche, Knoff, & Nelson, 1993; Pressley, 1993) focuses on the functional, curriculum-based assessment of referred students' learning problems by evaluating their progress in and response to the curriculum, their ability to succeed in the curriculum, and the instructional processes needed to teach them to skill mastery.

5. **The Social Skills, Behavioral Consultation, and Behavioral Interventions Component** (Goldstein, 1988; Kazdin, 1989; Stoner, Shinn, & Walker, 1991) focuses on the implementation of effective behavioral interventions to address students' curricular and behavioral problems and/or teachers' instructional and classroom management procedures. The cornerstone of this component is the school-wide and parent use of social skills training. This training provides students with specific procedures and behavioral skills to help them to confront and resolve social situations that involve conflict, interpersonal challenges, academic expectations, and other behavioral problems. This training is typically done with teachers who teach and reinforce the skills in the classroom. In addition, this training is school-wide to the extent that all staff (including bus drivers, cafeteria workers, and custodians) are trained and reinforce the social skills steps and procedures.

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6. **The Parent Training, Tutoring, and Support Component** (Christenson, Rounds, & Franklin, 1992) focuses on the development of ongoing home-school collaboration by (a) making parents an integral part of the planning and activities of Jesse Keen Elementary, (b) helping parents to understand teachers' expectations of their children and to increase their support of their children's academic and social development, (c) increasing parent-to-parent communication and resource building, and (d) support parent-to-teacher collaboration so as to build effective home-school partnerships.

7. **The Research and Accountability Component** involves collecting specific data that validate all various aspects of PROJECT ACHIEVE's components and program.

From a theoretical perspective, Project ACHIEVE uses a social learning theory approach in both its training and its assessment of students and student learning. The social learning theory approach emphasizes (a) teaching or modeling, (b) roleplay or practice, (c) reinforcement and direct performance feedback, and (d) generalization--to classroom and other settings, to new situations or circumstances, and across people, time, and curricular content.

G. Features: How the Program Operates

Project ACHIEVE is implemented in a series of carefully sequenced steps that occur typically over a three-year period. These steps are designed: (a) to maximize staff acceptance of the Project and its components; (b) to provide skill training where prerequisite skills were taught before more complex skills; (c) to insure the existence of classroom-based technical support and consultation; and (d) to facilitate accurate data collection to measure outcomes and demonstrate accountability. During the first three years, Project ACHIEVE runs parallels to the existing program of the school. Over time, however, as specific component areas are mastered by the staff, those areas replace previous practices such that Project ACHIEVE eventually becomes the "standard operating procedure" of the building. Briefly, Project ACHIEVE follows the following implementation steps:

Year Prior to Implementation: An detailed overview of Project ACHIEVE is presented to the entire staff of the school at a faculty meeting. The faculty is asked to vote (via a secret ballot) on the acceptance or rejection of the project. A minimum of 80% acceptance is required. Once accomplished, a organizational analysis and needs assessment of the building and surrounding community is completed, a School Climate Team, grade-level leaders, and a pupil personnel support team are identified, pre-Project baseline data is collected, and the operating system (including computers and other data-collection processes) are designed and established.

Years I/II/III: Project ACHIEVE begins, in a formal sense, in the Fall of the next year and can be implemented within a three year period of time. This timeframe, however, may vary given the needs of the school and its ability to integrate the program components at a level of skill mastery.

The formal process starts with (a) the typical consultation entry-level and introductory activities; (b) updated assessments of the strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities of the students, staff, parents, and surrounding community; (c) the completion of a Building Resources Directory, which identifies staffs' expertise, talents, and skills; and (d) an analysis of the child study and special education referral process for the building resulting in its functional realignment to a problem-solving, intervention-focused, and resource available process.

Training then proceeds, over the next three years, as outlined below.

Year 1

- Review of Project goals and activities with school staff
- Collection of baseline and other organizational data
- Assignment of grade-level leaders and school climate team
- Social Skills training
- Curriculum-Based Measurement norming and development of Curriculum-Based Assessment probes
- Initiate and implement the child study team problem-solving process
- Referral Question Consultation training
- Organizational, school climate, formative evaluation, and other pre-planning activities for Year 2.

Year 2

- New teacher training and booster session training in social skill and the Referral Question Consultation (RQC) process
- Implementation of RQC problem-solving with grade level teams
- Behavioral observation and instructional environment assessment training
- Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM) and Assessment (CBA) training
- Behavioral intervention training in group procedures, positive reinforcement, time-out, response cost, overcorrection, and grade-level teaming
- Organizational, school, climate, formative evaluation, and other pre-planning activities for Year 3

Year 3

- New teacher training and booster session training in social skills, RQC, CBM, CBA, and behavioral interventions
- Implementation of the Parent Drop-In Center program
- Instructional and curricular intervention training
- Initiation of the Training-of-Trainers process in the social skills and RQC areas
- Organizational analysis and strategic planning training at the administrative, child study team, and grade-level teams levels
- Organizational, school, climate, formative and summative evaluation, and other planning activities moving toward building independence and autonomy

Beyond Year 3, Project schools provide approximately one day per month of release time for all grade level teams so that they can plan and implement the activities identified on their Action Plans. Because behavior problems are often well in control at this point, many teams have focused on curricular adaptations such that their practices are in line with new national and state standards. At this point, most school staffs are working independently from the Project Directors or Project Support Staff who provide ongoing consultation as needed.

H. Implementation Period

Project ACHIEVE began in August of 1990 and continues through the present time. Data were collected on the outcome measures for two years prior to Project implementation.

I. Characteristics of Project Sites/Districts Currently Served:

Polk County Schools, Florida (Jesse Keen, Crystal Lake, Medulla, Auburndale, and Jewett Elementary Schools)
Hillsborough County Schools, Florida (Cleveland, Foster, DeSoto, Bryan-Plant City, Robles Elementary Schools)
Ft. Knox Department of Defense Schools, Kentucky (Crittenberger and Mudge Elementary Schools, MacDonald Intermediate School)
Dallas Independent School District, Texas (Hotchkiss Elementary School)
Alaska State Education Department

Polk County School District: Polk County School District has approximately 34,000 elementary students, 28% of whom are minorities, 48% of whom receive a free or reduced lunch and 8% of whom receive Chapter 1 services. Jesse Keen, a Chapter I elementary school, has 647 students, 73% of whom receive free or partial breakfast/lunch and 41% of whom are of ethnic minority affiliation.

Hillsborough County School District: Hillsborough County School District serves approximately 131,800 students. 40% of whom are minority students in 148 school buildings with a total instructional staff of over 7800 professionals. Project ACHIEVE is implemented in four elementary buildings (Robles, Cleveland, DeSoto, and Bryan-Plant City) designated as "School-Wide Projects Schools", based on qualifying for school-wide Chapter I funding. Each of the schools has approximately 800 students from low SES families. Each school has at least 75% of the student population on free- or reduced-lunch programs.

J. User and Cost Requirements

Minimal requirements necessary for implementing the Project at another site, with the exception of the Project Manager, include staff and resources (e.g., computers, space, and instructional/intervention resource materials) typically found in most (Chapter 1) school buildings as follows: a school counselor (1.0 FTE), school psychologist (0.8 FTE), school social worker or parent educator (1.0 FTE), reading and math instructional specialists (total 2.0 FTE), speech/language therapist (0.5 FTE), and a school nurse/health aid (1.0 FTE). In addition, buildings need permission to retain their existing special education staff, who become consultants and team-teachers to identified students in regular class settings, as these students are maintained increasingly in these regular class settings. Finally, a 1.0 FTE Project Manager is assigned to a building (or recruited from existing staff after training) to coordinate the entire Project.

With the exception of the Project Manager, the staff and FTE equivalents represent staff available in each of the nine buildings involved with the project. To date, across the schools involved, the following groups and/or agencies collaborate with the project at the school-based level:

a. Full-Service Schools Project
b. Mental Health Center
c. Chapter 1 Services
d. Pre-K Programs
e. Parents-Through the Parent Drop-In Centers
f. Psychological Services
g. Guidance and Counseling
h. Social Work
i. School Health Services
j. Drug-Free Schools Program

Prototypical costs for the Project are found below:

Item	Start-Up	Operation
Personnel	$50,000	$50,000
Training	$25,000	$10,000
Equipment	$ 5,000	$ 2,500
Materials and Supplies	$10,000	$ 2,500
Substitute Teachers	$35,000	$10,000
Total Cost:	$125,000	$75,000
Cost Per Student: (Based on a 750 student building)	$167/student	$100/student

Significantly, most of these funds/resources have routinely been accessed through Chapter/Title 1 and 2, Drug-Free Schools funds, District professional development and school reform funds, and business partnership/local foundation funds.

K. Funding Sources for the Project To Date

- U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (4 Personnel Preparation grants and 1 Field Initiated Studies grant)

Total Amount: over $2 Million

- Florida Department of Education, Office of Interagency and Related Services

Total Amount: over $500,000

- Local Effort
  - GTE Business Partnership
  - Chapter 2 Funds
  - Pride of Polk County
  - Governor's Grant Through Pride of Polk County
  - Drug Free Schools
  - George Jenkins Foundation

L. Evaluation Data: Indicators of Effectiveness

Indicators

- Student Outcomes: Discipline Records, Suspension/Expulsion Records, Grade Retention Records, Special Education Referrals, Placements, Decertification, Student Achievement Scores, Student Portfolios, Attendance

- Teacher Outcomes: Frequency of Social Skills Training in Classroom, Evaluation of Integrity of Training, Teacher Referrals to Office

- Direct/Indirect: Frequency of Use by Non-Instructional Personnel, Extent to Which Curriculum is Incorporated into Parent Education and Training, Extent to Which Curriculum is Coordinated Between Home and School

- School Outcomes: Discipline, Suspension/Expulsion, Grade Retention Records
  Teacher Satisfaction Measures
  School Climate Measures
  Grade-level and Building Strategic and Annual Outcome Plans
  School Achievement Scores
  Teacher Attendance/Student Attendance
  Parent Involvement and Business Partnerships
  Parent/Community Evaluation and Satisfaction Measures

Data Collection Schedule

Monthly :

- Discipline, suspension/expulsion, and attendance data are usually compiled each month from computer print-outs requested through the school office.
- Average number of social skills training sessions per week. Teachers complete easy checklist (1 minute).
- Number of teacher/staff training, parent education, and other technical assistance sessions conducted.
- Information regarding methods and frequency of home-school contacts (e.g., teacher newsletter home)

End-Of-Year:

- Grade retention, average student attendance, achievement scores.
- Teacher/Parent/Community Satisfaction Measures assessed through a survey that takes about 10 minutes to complete.

M. Results

Briefly, the major accomplishments of the Project have been: (a) a 75% decrease in student referrals to special education, (b) a 67% decrease in student placements in special education, (c) a 28% decline in total disciplinary referrals to the principal's office, (d) a decline in student grade retentions from 6% of the total student population to .006% of the student population, (e) a decline in out-of-school suspensions from 9% of the student population to 3% of the student population, (f) an increase in the number of students scoring above the 50th percentile on end-of-the-year achievement tests, especially for those involved at the youngest ages, (g) an improvement in teachers' perceptions of school climate, and (h) academic improvements for those students whose parents were trained in the Parent Drop-In Center.

Description of Results and Supplementary Evidence. Summarizing the efficacy data for the Project reveals the following results:

- Referrals of at-risk students for special education testing decreased 75% while the number of teacher consultations resulting in the implementation of effective academic and behavioral interventions by the regular classroom teachers significantly increased (from virtually none to more than 90).

- Placements of at-risk students into special education classrooms decreased by 67%, focusing particularly on placements for students with learning and emotional disabilities, while increasing the accuracy rate for placements so that the assessment process was more cost- and time-efficient.

- Discipline referrals to the principal's office decreased by 28% and bus referrals to the principal's office by 32%. In particular, the **number of fights** was reduced from 215 per year to approximately 65.

- Grade retention of students decreased from an average of 61 (6%) students per year during the two years before Project ACHIEVE to 1 (.006%) student during the two years after the beginning of Project ACHIEVE.

- The suspension rate decreased from 9% of the student population (approximately 65 students) to 3% of the student population (approximately 19 students), decreasing, at the same time, the money and time expended for formal disciplinary hearings relating to those suspensions.

- On three different measures of School Climate, taken just prior to Project implementation and in August of 1994, teachers average agreement on a five point scale as to positive school climate changed from 2.38 to 2.09 (Effective Schools Survey), from 2.62 to 2.43 (The Effective School Battery), and from 2.21 to 1.82 (Profile of a School).

- 100% of the parents and 82% of the teachers reported a significant decrease in the number and intensity of behavior problems in the target children and students during the parents' participation in the Parent Drop-In Center (DIC). All parents made gains of 10-20% on the objective measure of course content. 82% of the parents agreed or agreed strongly that their relationship with their children had improved, and 91% agreed or agreed strongly that they had better control of their children as a result of training. 100% of the parents rated the classes as helpful or very helpful in improving their parenting skills. Twice as many target as control students improved in their behavior as a result of parent participation in the DIC. There was no significant difference between target and control students in the area of academic development, as measured by report card grades.

N. Educational Significance of the Results

1. Relationship of Results to Needs. Project ACHIEVE has demonstrated that a school-wide reform program using comprehensive staff development and training can significantly enhance the social and academic behavior of at-risk students, the primary needs addressed by this Project. Project ACHIEVE has as its focus training in the specific academic and behavioral skills necessary to meet the needs of a changing and diverse student population. A basic assumption of the project was that the outcome of enhancing teacher skills would be the development of a school climate that had "every student is everybody's responsibility" as its central belief. As a result, the school environment became more flexible in meeting the needs of individual students rather than using special education, alternative education, suspension centers, and grade retention to remove large numbers of students who "did not fit." This Project has provided a blueprint for schools with diverse populations to functionally achieve inclusion.

2. Comparison of Results to Other Programs. While extending and exceeding other school reform projects (e.g., Graden, Casey, & Bonstrom, 1985; Graden, Casey, & Christenson, 1985; Lennox, Hyman, & Hughes, 1988; Ponti, Zins, & Graden, 1988), Project ACHIEVE is notable in that it has looked not only at special education referral and placement rates, but also building-level discipline, retention, suspension, and academic achievement changes over time. In facilitating this comprehensive change process, in the face of a large and stable at-risk and underachieving student body, Project ACHIEVE attempted to impact the building's philosophical and organizational approach to service delivery, the skills and resources of the teachers and other resource personnel, the support and involvement of the parents, and the attitudes, expectations, and social and academic accomplishments of the students.

O. Publications Describing/Evaluating Program

Knoff, H. M., & Batsche, G. M. (1995). Project ACHIEVE: Analyzing a school reform process for at-risk and underachieving students. **School Psychology Review, 24**, 579-603.

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P. National Recognition of Project ACHIEVE

- Semi-finalist in the U. S. Department of Education's National Awards Program for Model Professional Development, October, 1996.

- Recipient of over $5 million in external Federal and State grants (Department of Education) over the past five years, including four U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education training grants and one U. S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Innovation field-initiated research grant.

- One of five programs across the country to be funded by the Metropolitan Life Foundation's **Positive Choices: Youth Anti-Violence Initiatives** program in the Fall of 1995 for $100,000.

- Received Honorable Mention in the Coalition on Educational Initiatives' and USA TODAY's Community Solutions for Education national awards program, May, 1995. The Coalition on Educational Initiatives includes Apple Computer, Inc.; Proctor & Gamble; State Farm Insurance Companies; and Subaru of America, Inc., and over twenty national professional associations.

- Designated as the best Model Student Services Program in Florida by the State Department of Education in its "Promising Programs and Practices" competition for 1994-1995

- Highlighted on the ABC News' 20/20 program "Being Teased, Taunted, and Bullied" on April 28th, 1995

- Featured at the April, 1995 National Education Association Safe Schools Summit in Los Angeles

- Invited for presentation at the National Education Goals Panel/National Association of Pupil Personnel Service Organization's "Safe Schools, Safe Communities" meeting in Washington, D. C., October, 1994

- Project Co-Directors awarded the "Outstanding Educators Award" from the Florida Association of Student Services Administrators, 1993

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An Integrated Student-Centered Service Delivery Model for Public School Systems

Facilitating Systemic Change in School Districts' Process of Delivering Comprehensive Student Services

I. Conceptualization and Principles of Planning and Action

Utilizing a model recommended by a number of State Departments of Education relative to the development of an integrated student-centered service delivery system, five components are outlined below that can facilitate the integration and planning of a systematic **and systemic** change process for public school districts. Organized using these five components are a number of principles that help to guide subsequent planning and action.

A. Finance and Funding

- Funding is critical to design, development, and implementation of integrated services systems.
- Funding must be adequate, accessible, flexible, arranged for prior to the system change implementation, and committed for an appropriate number of years.
- All possible sources of funding must be identified and used: local, state, federal, private.
- The District must explore cost sharing and cost blending both within and outside of the system.
- The community should be encouraged to participate in the system change process through its agencies and multiple funding sources as appropriate.

B. Administration and Policy

- Shared responsibility for success/failure of services must occur across the District and within the participating schools.
- Clear agreements must exist relative to the differential responsibility of inter-departmental units and inter-school collaborative efforts (within District) and relative to inter-agency efforts.
- Collaborative partners at the administrative, training, and system change implementation levels must communicate thoroughly, openly, and often.
- Top administrators in each unit, as involved, must support and encourage interagency commitment.

C. Professional Training and Competency

- Qualifications and the positive and proactive attitudes of involved school district personnel is necessary and will influence system change effectiveness.
- Training should be coordinated and provided by trainers skilled and experienced in the content areas identified.
- School and district providers must:
  - Be well-trained at the knowledge, skills, and confidence levels
  - Receive initial supervision in identified skill areas such that mastery is attained prior to actual skill implementation, and ongoing administrative and skill support such that ongoing confidence, generalization, and independence results
  - Participate in collaborative/integrated training that involves all building and support staff as appropriate

D. Service Delivery

- Site-based management is a key to the development of a successful administrative and educational operation where district-level resources support building-level activities.
- Involved buildings, including teachers, support and other staff, students, and parents are supported in improving student performance and behavior, parent and community involvement, and staff collaboration and implementation of systems change.
- Service Delivery:
  - Is provided to students and families through a unified system of education where everyone is responsible for the education of all students and where regular, special education, and other compensatory services are integrated and seamless.
  - Represents a continuum from prevention and early intervention to more direct remedial and compensatory interventions
  - Is multidisciplinary within the building and multiagency outside of the building as needed.
  - Is provided through a network embracing students and families of all races, cultures, and languages, with and without disability.
  - Guarantees accountability for all students through a system of unified outcomes.
  - Offers a unified, yet flexible, curriculum that is shared among and with educators and that has specified outcomes.

E. Research, Evaluation, and Program Development

- Research, Evaluation, and Program Development occurs as part of a systematic, strategic planning process where action plans are developed to coordinate resources and personnel and to guide and assess implementation activities.
- Research, Evaluation, and Program Development includes procedures to evaluate (a) student outcomes; (b) personnel skills, participation, and outcomes; (c) fiscal and systemic outcomes; and (d) home and community outcomes.
- Research, Evaluation, and Program Development is both formative and summative and provides ongoing data that guide important implementation decisions.

- Research, Evaluation, and Program Development allows everyone involved to focus on improvement while providing feedback as to when critical goals have been reached.
- Research, Evaluation, and Program Development looks at time-efficacy and cost-efficacy, but does not sacrifice student and other important outcomes because of either.
- Research, Evaluation, and Program Development ensures system and Project accountability.

II. Plan for Planning Activities Needed for Implementation

A. Determine the number of buildings that will be involved in the systems change process in Years 1 through 5 with a selection and phase-in process defined.

B. Determine the amount of money that will be needed to support the systems change process over a multi-year process:

-- by building
-- relative to the training process (training the trainers, implementing the training, supporting and following up the training)
-- relative to providing the district-level support necessary to maintain the systems change process (e.g., a district-level coordinator, building cluster coordinators, etc.).

C. Secure the funds from building, district, community, and outside grant/foundation sources.

D. Determine the resource people/staffing patterns needed for and/or in each building to implement the Project and arrange for these staffing moves/patterns prior to systems change implementation.

E. Determine the policies or procedures that need, at the building and/or district level, to be added, amended, and/or waived over the multi-year phase-in process to ensure the success and maintain the integrity of the systems change process, and secure these changes or the necessary agreements at the appropriate building, District, or (for example) Union levels.

F. Determine the specific training and support activities needed at the district level such that training in the following areas can be provided, to the largest extent possible, by district personnel:

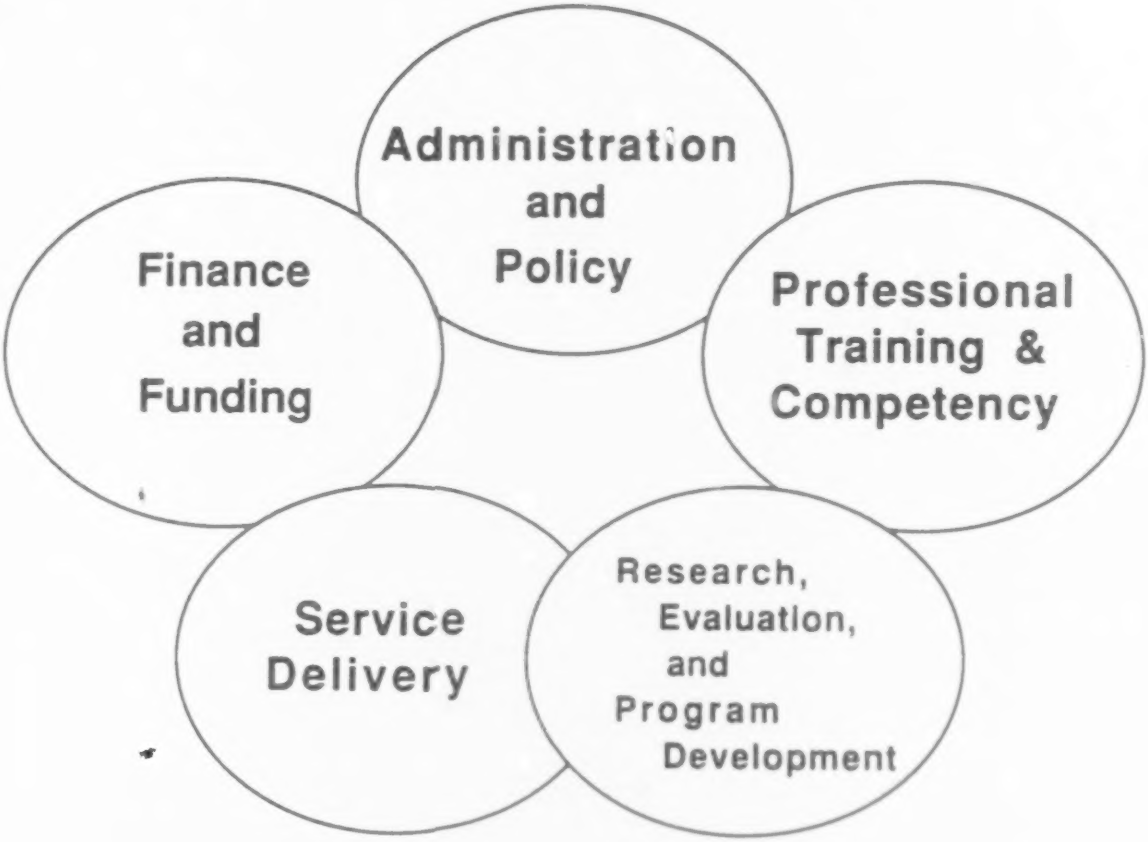
Social Skills training
Referral Question Consultative problem-solving training
Observation/Cumulative Folder Analysis/Classroom Assessment training
Behavioral Intervention training
Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM) training
Instructional Intervention training

This process includes the preparation of support material and systems (e.g., the creation of CBM probes and completion of district-wide CBM norming), the identification and preparation of trainers, the development of quality control and accountability systems for training implementation, and the provision for follow-up and booster training sessions over time such that the momentum of the Project and its component skills is maintained.

G. Determine how the systems change process will be evaluated and create the data-management system needed for district and school implementation.

H. Determine how to develop and maintain a positive public awareness of the systems change process, its components, and its accomplishments.

The Integrated Student-Centered Service Delivery Model for Public School Systems


Administration and Policy
Finance and Funding
Professional Training & Competency
Service Delivery
Research, Evaluation, and Program Development

Building/District Criteria Evaluating Readiness to Engage in an Integrated Services Change Process

Building/District Selection Considerations

I. District-Level Considerations

Administrative Support for the Project	Yes	No
1. Is there a willingness to move from an assessment to an intervention posture?	____	____
2. Can we decrease the student service personnel : student ratio in the project schools?	____	____
3. Can the student service supervisors agree that Project activities (training, intervention, evaluation) have priority for their staff in project buildings?	____	____
4. Is there a willingness to request deviations/waivers from some district procedures that support an assessment/placement route rather than the intervention route?	____	____
5. Is there a willingness to train/involve all school personnel, not just certified/instructional personnel?	____	____
6. Can school personnel in designated schools be released for additional training/supervision? Approximately 5 days/year.	____	____
7. Is there a willingness to reassign staff, as necessary, to support the Project? This would involve primarily student services staff.	____	____
8. Is there a willingness to have monthly meetings between Asst. Supt./Principals/PPS Directors/School Psychologists/Full-Service Schools Staff to discuss progress and problem solve?	____	____
9. Is there a commitment by the Special Education Department to a consultation/pull-in model and integrated services?	____	____
10. Is there a commitment to involve the Research Dept. of the district for data collection/evaluation?	____	____

	Yes	No
Funding for the Project		
1. Can the district fund teacher substitutes to release teachers for training?	----	____
2. Can the district provide funding for materials/supplies?	----	____
3. Can the district fund some increase in staff costs associated with keeping staff/student ratios acceptable?	----	____
Parent/community Support for the Project		
1. Does the district have a parent education or home-school liaison position?	----	____
2. Can school-community-business partnerships be used to support the project?	----	____

II. Building-Level Considerations

Building Administrator Support		
1. Is there a willingness to make the Project activities a very high priority (time/$)?	----	____
2. Is there a commitment to intensive staff training?	----	____
3. Is there a willingness to incorporate new staff skills into the personnel evaluation process?	----	____
4. Is there a willingness to assign Project coordinating tasks (e.g., social skills leader) to some staff?	----	____
5. Can the administration support consultation/indirect service delivery model instead of a test-staff-place model?	----	____
6. Is there a willingness to give a five-year commitment to the project?	----	____
7. Will project goals be written into individual school improvement plans?	----	____
8. Will the building-level SAC be involved?	----	____
9. Will pupil personnel staff in the building operate as teams?	----	____

	Yes	No
Staffing Team Organization		
1. Can the staffing team be reconfigured toward an intervention focus?	____	____
2. Can we make time available during the day for intervention team meetings?	____	____
3. Can we modify procedures to support intervention-based services rather than a triage/assessment model?	____	____
4. Can some staffing team members (counselor, social worker, psychologist, administrator) be assigned to intervention support activities such as implementing interventions with teachers in classroom?	____	____
5. Can school psychologists be assigned in two-person "teams" to school buildings?	____	____
Building Staff		
1. Will the staff be given the opportunity to vote on their involvement in Project ACHIEVE?	____	____
2. Will the staff:		
-understand the need to change some procedures?	____	____
-move from a child-centered problem view to a system-centered intervention view?	____	____
-participate in training activities?	____	____
-be willing to risk, try new things, receive collegial supervision?	____	____
-be willing to take a more active role in interventions?	____	____
-adopt the belief that every child is everyone's responsibility?	____	____

E. Sample of Project Sites/Districts Currently Using Project ACHIEVE:

At the present time, the majority of the schools participating in this project are Title I school-wide or Full-Service schools. Some Project ACHIEVE schools have focused only on our Stop & Think Social Skills process, while other schools have implemented or intend to implement the entire, comprehensive process.

Currently, Project ACHIEVE is being implemented in schools across the states of Florida and Alaska, as coordinated through their respective State Departments of Education. In addition, at least six schools have been involved in the Project for at least three years. Finally, new schools are slowly coming "on-line." For example, Project ACHIEVE has recently been introduced to individual schools in the Baltimore City Schools and in Baton Rouge. The contact people for a sample of schools and school districts currently implementing Project ACHIEVE appears below:

Project ACHIEVE in the Polk County School District: The Polk County School District has approximately 80,000 students district-wide with approximately 34,000 elementary students, 28% of whom are minorities, 48% of whom receive a free or reduced lunch and 8% of whom receive Chapter 1 services. While components of the Project have been implemented district-wide, three schools in particular have comprehensively implemented the Project.

Jesse Keen Elementary School. Polk County, Florida.
815 Plateau Road
Lakeland, FL 33801

Contacts: Joyce Bushey, Principal
941-499-2880

Lloyd Mattingly, Project Director
941-499-2288

Brief Profile _. Jesse Keen Elementary School was the first Project ACHIEVE site, and it remains our primary demonstration and training site. Jesse Keen is a Title I schoolwide school that has approximately 700 students, 90% of whom are on the federal free-lunch program. Located in an inner-city warehouse district, the school's staff have received training in every component of the Project, and they are now implementing virtually every facet independently within a site-based management system. Jesse Keen is a full-service school and has a fully functioning Parent Drop-In Center that provides parent training and outreach services.

Briefly, the major accomplishments of the Project at Jesse Keen have been: (a) a 75% decrease in student referrals to special education, (b) a 67% decrease in student placements in special education, (c) a 28% decline in total disciplinary referrals to the principal's office, (d) a decline in student grade retentions from 6% of the total student population to .006% of the student population, (e) a decline in out-of-school suspensions from 9% of the student population to 3% of the student population, (f) an increase in the number of students scoring above the 50th percentile on end-of-the-year achievement tests, especially for those involved at the youngest ages, (g) an improvement in teachers' perceptions of school climate, and (h) academic improvements for those students whose parents were trained in the Parent Drop-In Center.

Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior, University of Oregon and Lane School
Eugene, Oregon

Contact Information:

Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior (EBS and First Step to Success)

Jeff Sprague & Hill Walker
Co-Directors
Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior
1265 University of Oregon
Eugene, OR 97403
(541) 346-3591

Lane School

Michael George
Supervisor, Lane School
1200 Highway 99 North
P.O. Box 2680
Eugene, OR 97402
(541) 461-8200

Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum

Committee for Children
2203 Airport Way South
Suite 500
Seattle, WA 98134
(800) 634-4449
(206) 343-1223

Program Materials:

The Importance of Early Intervention

Walker, H. M., Horner, R. H., Sugai, G., Bullis, M., Sprague, J.R., Bricker, D., & Kaufman, M.J. (1996). Integrated approaches to preventing antisocial behavior patterns among school-age children and youth. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, 4*(4), 194-209.

Effective Behavior Support (EBS)

Taylor-Greene, S., Brown, D., Nelson, L., Longton, J., Gassman, T., Cohen, J., & Swartz, J. (1997). School-wide behavioral support: Starting the year off right. *Journal of Behavioral Education, 7*, 99-112.

Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum

Grossman, D.C., Neckerman, H.J., Koepsell, T.D., Liu, P. Asher, K.N., Beland, K., Frey, K., & Rivara, F.P. (1997). Effectiveness of a violence prevention curriculum among children in elementary school: A randomized controlled trial. *Journal of the American Medical Association, 277*(20), 1605-1611.

Mehas, K., Bowling, K., Sobieniak, S., Sprague, J., Burke, M.D., & Hagan, S. (1998). Finding a safe haven in middle school. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 30*(4), 20-23.

Rosenberg, M.L., Powell, K.E., & Hammond, R. (1997). Applying science to violence prevention. *Journal of the American Medical Association, 277*(20), 1641-1642.

First Step to Success

Golly, A., Stiller, B., & Walker, H.M. (under review). First step to success: Replication and social validation of an early intervention program for achieving secondary prevention goals. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders.*

Walker, H.M. (1998). First step to success: Preventing antisocial behavior among at-risk kindergartners. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 30*(4), 16-19.

Walker, H.M., Severson, H.H., Feil, E.G., Stiller, B., & Golly, A. (1997). *First step to success: Intervening at the point of school entry to prevent antisocial behavior patters.* Longmont, CO: Sopris West.

Walker, H.M., Stiller, B., & Golly, A. (in press). First step to success: A collaborative home-school intervention for preventing antisocial behavior at the point of school entry. *Young Exceptional Children.*

Walker, H.M., Stiller, B., Severson, H.H., Kavanagh, K., Golly, A., & Feil, E.G. (in press). First step to success: An early intervention approach for preventing school antisocial behavior. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, 5*(4).

Lane School

George, M.P., & George, N. (19--). *The Lane School program: Creating supports for troubled students.* Eugene, OR: Lane Education Service District.

George, M.P., Valore, T., Quinn, M.M., & Varisco, R. (1997). Preparing to go home: A collaborative approach to transition. *Preventing School Failure, 41*(4), 168-172.

See the following pages for reproducible materials.

First Step to Success

Sopris West

Helping Young Children Overcome Antisocial Behavior

Hill Walker, Ph.D., Kate Kavanaugh, Ph.D., Annemieke Golly, Ph.D.,
Bruce Stiller, Ph.D., Herbert Severson, Ph.D., Edward Feil, Ph.D.

First Step to Success Program

First
Step
to
Success

An early intervention program for grades K-3, *First Step* takes a collaborative home and school approach to diverting at-risk children from a path leading to adjustment problems, school failure and drop-out, social rejection, juvenile delinquency in adolescence, and gang membership and interpersonal violence. By recruiting parents as partners with the school, *First Step* teaches children a behavior pattern that contributes to school success and the development of friendships.

First Step aids children in getting off to the best start possible in their school career by teaching them: (1) To get along with teachers and peers; and (2) To engage in schoolwork in an appropriate manner.

During the two- to three-month implementation in regular class and home settings, small amounts of teacher and parent time are required. The three interrelated components of First Step are highly effective when employed together:

First Step Screening—proactive, universal screening options utilizing teacher ratings

First Step CLASS—a time-tested school intervention newly adapted for young children

homeBase—a family-centered, six-week intervention that enlists parents in teaching their children skills that contribute to school success (cooperation, friendship skills, accepting limits, self-esteem, problem-solving, and sharing school).

First Step to Success Training

Although the *First Step* kit is self-instructional, intensive one-day training sessions for consultants and teachers is recommended. For more information about training, contact Rebecca Williamson, Sopris West, 1140 Boston Avenue, Longmont, CO 80501, (303) 651-2829 or (800) 547-6747.

Starter Kit—Everything you need to implement the *First Step* program is provided in the *First Step to Success* Tote Bag. It includes supplies for three implementations: the *First Step to Success Implementation Guide*, the *homeBase Consultant Guide*, three copies of the *homeBase Parent Handbook*, *First Step Overview Videotape*, a stopwatch, three sets of CLASS component cards, lanyard, and three homeBase Parent Boxes (which include homeBase Parent Help Cards, homeBase Activity Cards, timer, pen, paper, markers, and stickers).

Re-supply Kit—Everything you need for one additional implementation. It includes: *homeBase Parent Handbook*, complete set of CLASS component cards, and homeBase Parent Box (which includes homeBase Parent Help Cards, homeBase Activity Cards, timer, pen, paper, markers, and stickers).

The Lane School Program

The Lane School Program consists of two major components: a teacher consultation program and a self-contained day-school. The primary goal of the program is to assist local schools in educating children and youth with emotional and behavioral problems.

The consultation program retains six (full-time equivalent) teacher consultants to serve the 16 school districts of Lane County. Commensurate with the philosophy of Education Service Districts, the teacher consultation program provides districts with equitable access to the services of highly qualified behavior consultants. Teacher consultants work with teachers and other local district staff to engage them in creative problem solving and the implementation of two major types of interventions: general classroom and individualized interventions. General classroom interventions target and strengthen a teacher's overall classroom management and instructional practices. Individualized interventions focus on a particular student. At times, consultants are involved with interventions that target the entire school, presenting workshops aimed at violence prevention or school safety, or designing building-wide discipline plans.

Originally aimed solely at adolescents who were classified as seriously emotionally disturbed, the target population of eligible students has been expanded within the past four years to include *any child or youth at any level of schooling* who is at-risk for or who displays serious behavior problems. Broadening the eligible population of students has allowed consultants to work with younger students, and to design strategies for resolving present problems and that may prevent more serious problems from occurring in the future. Every year, consultants provide assistance to approximately 300 students.

The consultation process is research-based and consists of a series of steps developed by Drs. Sugai and Tindal from the University of Oregon in conjunction with the Lane School consultants and supervisor. The steps in the process were modeled after the *The Individuals with Disabilities Act*, and serve to enhance the consistency of service across districts and consultants.

Lane School, the day-school component of the program, serves adolescents, ages 12 and above, who have a history of long-standing behavior problems. The school itself is relatively small, consisting of four classrooms and serves between 36 and 42 students each year. The average length of stay for students is 13.4 school months. The program provides a positive, safe and caring environment where students can actively engage in the process of learning new and useful skills that will benefit them now and into the future.

Students who enter the program participate in a level system, token economy and a schedule of core courses that includes reading, language arts, mathematics, social studies, and physical education, and social skills. The program integrates the direct teaching of social skills and anger management throughout every aspect of its curriculum. Recognizing the importance of comprehensive interventions for meeting the complex needs of adolescents with chronic behavior problems, the program makes every effort to involve parents and community agencies on behalf of its students. When students successfully complete the program, they are transitioned to their home school, following a highly detailed transition process that is individualized to their needs.

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Appendix C

Meeting Agendas

Westerly Public Schools
Westerly, Rhode Island

Tuesday, January 20, 1998

8:30 - 9:00	Introduction & Continental Breakfast (Bradford Elementary School)
9:00 - 11:00	Site Visit – Bradford Elementary School Springbrook Elementary School Babcock Middle School
11:00 - 12:00	Initial Discussion (Westerly High School)
12:00 - 1:00	Lunch (WHS)
1:00 - 2:00	Regular Education Focus Group (WHS)
2:30 - 3:30	Special Education Focus Group (WHS)
4:00 - 5:00	Family Focus Group (WHS)
5:00 - 5:30	Initial Reflections (WHS)
6:00 - 8:00	Informal Dinner for Panelists, Westerly Representatives, and CECP Staff

Wednesday, January 21, 1998

8:30 - 9:00	Further Reflections (Westerly High School)
9:00 - 10:00	Student Focus Group (WHS)
10:30 - 11:30	Administrators/School Board Members Focus Group (District Offices)
12:00 - 1:00	Change Agents/Agency Representatives Focus Group (DO)
1:00 - 2:00	Lunch (DO)
2:00 - 3:30	Discussion (DO)
3:30 - 3:45	Break (DO)
3:45 - 5:00	Wrap-up Discussion (DO)

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Project ACHIEVE
Polk and Hillsborough Counties, Florida

Monday, February 9, 1998 **Jesse Keen Elementary School, Lakeland, FL**

8:30 - 9:00	Welcome & Introduction
9:00 - 10:00	Project ACHIEVE Overview and Site Visit: Jesse Keen Elementary School, Lakeland, FL
10:00 - 11:45	Classroom Demonstration and Student Focus Group
12:00 - 1:15	Working Lunch: Administrators/School Board Members Focus Group
1:15 - 2:15	Regular Educators Focus Group
2:15 - 3:15	Family Members Focus Group
3:15 - 4:15	Special Educators Focus Group
4:15 - 4:30	Break
4:30 - 5:00	Panel Group Reflections

Tuesday, February 10, 1998 **University of South Florida, Tampa, FL**

8:30 - 9:00	Welcome/Introductions/Panel Reflections
9:00 - 10:00	Project ACHIEVE Presentation
10:00 - 11:00	School and Community Outreach Focus Group
11:00 - 12:00	State Dept. of Ed./Project ACHIEVE Change Agents Focus Group
12:00 - 1:00	Administrators/Community Change Agents Focus Group
1:00 - 2:00	Lunch
2:00 - 3:30	Discussion (Panel)
3:30 - 3:45	Break
3:45 - 5:00	Wrap-up Discussion (Panel)

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Lane County Public Schools & Lane School
Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior, University of Oregon
Eugene, Oregon

Thursday, March 5, 1998	**University of Oregon and Kennedy Middle School**
8:30 - 9:00	Welcome & Introduction (University of Oregon)
9:00 - 9:30	Presentation on School-to-Work Transitions – Dr. Mike Bullis
9:30 - 11:30	Site Visits – Eugene Elementary Schools, Kennedy Middle School, & Lane School
11:30 - 12:30	Lunch (Kennedy Middle School)
12:30 - 1:45	Student Focus Group
1:45 - 2:45	Family Members Focus Group
2:45 - 3:00	Travel Back to University of Oregon
3:00 - 4:00	Special Educators Focus Group (University of Oregon)
4:00 - 5:00	Regular Educators Focus Group
5:00 - 5:30	Initial Panelist Reflections
Evening	Informal dinner with panelists

Friday, March 6, 1998	**University of Oregon**
8:30 - 9:00	Welcome and Introductions
9:00 - 10:00	Presentation on First Step to Success – Hill Walker, Annemeike Golly and University of Oregon students who have implemented First Step to Success
10:00 - 11:00	Administrators/School Board Members Focus Group
11:00 - 12:00	Change Agents/Agency Representatives Focus Group
12:00 - 1:30	Lunch
1:30 - 2:30	Panel Discussion
2:30 - 2:45	Break
2:45 - 5:00	Wrap-up Panel Discussion

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Appendix D

Focus Group Questions

Students

1) What is your name and what grade are you in?
2) What do you like most about your school?
3) What do you like least about your school?
4) Do you feel safe at school?
5) What are the most important things that the adults at your school do to make you safe?
6) What are the rules for how to behave at your school?
7) Did kids help come up with these rules?
8) Do you think it's important for kids to be involved in helping set the rules?
9) What do your teachers do to help you remember and follow the rules?
   9a) What other adults help you remember and follow the rules and what do they do?
10) If you or a friend had a serious problem, who at your school would you go to for help?
11) What advice can you give us to help students behave better?
12) What advice can you give us to help make schools safer?

Family Members

1) Please take one minute to introduce yourself. (6 minutes)
2) What do you see as the three major discipline and school safety related problems at your child's school? (6 minutes)
3) What does your child's school do to support appropriate behavior and promote safe schools for your child and other children? (15 minutes)
4) How are parents involved in your child's school's attempts to create a safe and orderly environment that promotes learning and development? (15 minutes)
5) What can the rest of the nation learn from your child's school about making schools safe and drug free environments that promote learning and development? (15 minutes)

Special Educators/Related Service Personnel

1) Please introduce yourself, stating your grade level or subject area. Briefly state the three most common discipline problems at your school. (5 minutes)
2) Among students with disabilities, what are the key things that are done at your school to support positive student behavior and who are the key players in implementing these? (16 min.)
3) What impact have these measures had? (16 min.)
4) What would it be like at your school without these services and supports? (6 min.)
5) What can special educators or related service providers across the nation learn from your school about making schools safe and drug free for all students? (16 min.)

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Regular Educators

1) Please introduce yourself stating your grade level or subject area. Briefly state the three most common discipline problems at your school. (5 minutes)
2) What are the key things that are done at your school to support positive student behavior and who are the key players in implementing these? (16 min.)
3) What impact have these measures had? (16 min.)
4) What would it be like in your school without these services and supports? (6 min.)
5) What can teachers across the nation learn from your school about making schools safe and drug free for all students? (16 min.)

Administrators/School Board Members

1) Please introduce yourself and tell us what you think are the 3 major discipline and school safety related problems in your school district. (10 minutes)
2) What are the key things that are done in your district to support positive student behavior and who are the key players in implementing these? (15 minutes)
3) What do you see as the major barriers to collaboration and what can Federal, state and local officials do to eliminate them? (15 minutes)
4) What can administrators and school board members across the nation learn from your district about making schools safe and drug free for all students? (15 minutes)
5) What would it be like in your school without these services and supports? (5 minutes)

Change Agents/Agency Representatives

1) Please introduce yourself and tell us what you see as your role in helping create safe and drug free schools that support learning and development. (15 minutes)
2) What are the key things that you do to support schools' efforts to create safe and drug free schools that support learning and development? (15 minutes)
3) What do you see as the major barriers to collaboration and what can Federal, state and local officials do to eliminate them? (15 minutes)
4) What are the lessons that people like you and other communities can learn from your experiences working in/with schools? (15 minutes)

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